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CONTENTS

	Page
COMMENTS	1
THE AIR MINISTRY AND THE CLIPPER	4
PAYING FOR THE WAR	5
A LONDON DIARY	6
THIS ENGLAND	7
IRISH GUNPOWDER. By R. M. Fox	8
EQUALITY IN EATING. By Y. Y.	8
PEACE AIM. By Sagittarius	10
MR. MUNNINGS AND ULTRA-MODERN ART. By Clive Bell	10
TWO POEMS. Louis MacNeice	11
PLAYS AND PICTURES	11
CORRESPONDENCE	12
From G. L.; Charles Roden Buxton; Bjarne Braatoy; "Barrister"; Leonard R. Whittall; W. J. Casey; Hugh Barnes; Clive Bell.	
THE RIGHTS OF MAN. By Kingsley Martin	15
REVIEWS:	
Battlepiece. By V. S. Pritchett	17
War Aims. By Tom Paine	17
Some Careers. By K. John	18
Physical Fun. By Barrington Gates	20
Another Translation of Chin P'Ing Mei. By Harold Acton	22
SHORTER NOTICES	22
BOOKS TO COME. By Marie Scott-James	24
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS	24
CROSSWORD	25
THE WEEK IN THE CITY. By Cynicus	26

THE POLITICS OF WAR

IN his remarkable speech to Congress on Wednesday, President Roosevelt made it clear that he was ready to help in bringing peace as soon as that should be possible; he was emphatic about American neutrality but equally concerned to warn Americans that they cannot be unaffected by the war or indifferent to its issues. The United States valued democratic rights. "We know we ourselves will never be wholly safe at home unless other governments recognise such freedoms." Significant, too, were indications in his speech that the President now regards the U.S.S.R. as a Totalitarian State in the same category as Nazi Germany. This raises the great issue which is still confusing the minds of European diplomats. All those who hope for peace and all those with progressive inclinations have continued to hope that it would be possible to prevent a genuine partnership between Stalin and Hitler; they have worked to maintain good relations with Stalin in the belief, probably still well-founded, that he is in the last resort the enemy of Fascism. On the other side, the opposite school of thought has throughout worked to patch up peace with Hitler and "switch the war" into an anti-Bolshevik crusade. This is clearly at the back of Italian and Papal policy; it suits French and British hopes of maintaining Italian friendship and of procuring in Spain a regime which is anti-Hitler. The recall of the French, British and Italian ambassadors from Moscow and the military measures taken in the Near East to prevent a possible repetition of Russian aggression in areas which supply the British Empire with oil are significant of the present trend of world politics.

In France opinion is divided. M. D'Ormesson of the *Figaro*, however, is now openly demanding full help for Finland on the ground that it is no longer possible to draw "subtle distinctions between the Nazis and the Soviets." French, British and Italian help has already gone on a small scale to Finland, and the Nazis, by way of confirming M. D'Ormesson's view, now openly threaten to end Swedish neutrality if she co-operates with Britain and France in aiding Finland. This puts the Swedes into a terrible dilemma. They have only too much cause for fear if Russia is allowed to conquer Finland, and all their inclinations are in favour of giving full help to their neighbour. On the other hand, they fear aggression from Germany, where Julius Streicher is already talking of Sweden as a plotting-ground for Jews. They do not wish to precipitate a German attack, but fear that it may be planned in any case. Germany and Russia are now playing in Scandinavia the same game that Germany and Italy played in Spain. They are partners in this aggression; it is the role of the one to ward off the Democratic Powers, while the other attempts, so far with nothing but military ignominy, to destroy his chosen victim.

Earthquakes in Turkey

The latest news of the ghastly devastation in Turkey only strengthens the case, urged by Herbert Morrison, for increasing the British subscription to the work of relief from £25,000 to £100,000. In the cold of the highlands the misery must be indescribable, and it is fortunate indeed that the railway to Erzinkan (which runs on to Erzerum and the Russian frontier and was just completed last September) was only blocked to relief trains for 24 hours. The area chiefly affected—Eastern Anatolia—is for the most part thinly populated; and the disaster does not seem likely to disturb either the military defences of Turkey or the industrial areas which have been so vigorously developed of recent years. The cotton mills of Kayscri, for instance, are unharmed, and the only large plant which has been damaged is the cement works at Sivas. How far the more fertile and thickly populated Black Sea coast has been affected, it is too early to judge. In the west more harm has been done by floods than by the earthquake shocks, especially in the valleys leading down to Smyrna, where the extensive irrigation works, recently completed, have been largely destroyed.

Wages, Prices and Government Policy

The wages question has been the subject of further negotiation this week between the Trade Unions and the Government. Although no details of the proceedings have been published, it seems clear that Sir John Simon has been asking the Unions for pledges not to press for wage advances to compensate for increases in the cost of living. The Trades Union Congress General Council, which has, of course, no power to tie the hands of its affiliated Unions but can offer influential advice, is in no mood to make any promises while the Government's financial policy remains as uncertain as it is to-day, or while the control of industry appears to be largely exercised by big firms or capitalist combines acting in the name of the State. The Trade Union leaders no doubt realise well enough that it is impossible for real wages to rise while a large part of current output is being diverted to war needs; but they are not unnaturally afraid that, if they promise not to seek higher money wages, the effect will be, not so much to prevent prices from rising, as to swell business and financial profits at the expense of the incomes of the main body of the people. They are not, however, desirous of pressing their claims further than they must in order to satisfy their own constituents. The miners' leaders, for example, while they are demanding an advance sufficient to meet the rise in prices that has already occurred, are apparently ready not to press their claim for an automatic sliding scale of wages to offset further increases in the cost of living.

The American Tariff

The Republicans are already testing American public opinion in order to pick the issues on which to fight the impending presidential campaign. It looks as if one of these issues may be that of American tariff policy. The Reciprocal Tariff Act, under which Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Cordell Hull have concluded the numerous liberal tariff bargains made during the past few years, is due to expire in June; and there will certainly be a battle over its renewal. Probably it will be renewed; but there will be much said from the Republican side about the sacrifice of essential American economic interests—*i.e.* those of Big Business, camouflaged as the maintenance of American wage-standards—and about the "free trade" principles on which Mr. Hull has been operating the tariff—*i.e.* the largely successful removal of tariff manipulation from the sphere of log-rolling and "pressure" politics inside Congress. But it does not follow that the Republicans will dare to make the tariff a primary election issue. They will try it out on the public during the next few months, in the hope of discovering whether Big Business has thrown off enough of its unpopularity to venture on an open fight for a return to the old ways of tariff-making.

The Assurance of Lord Macmillan

The pamphlet issued by the Ministry of Information under the title "Assurance of Victory" has had a mixed reception: it has either been ignored or condemned. Quite rightly the critics have called attention to the dangerous complacency of the argument that we have only to sit tight in order to win. A partial explanation is to be found in the history of the pamphlet's production. Born last June, it was baptised *The Struggle Ahead* and was planned for use in the first weeks of a war, which we all supposed would begin with a terrific *Blitzkrieg*. At this time it was by no means stupid to believe that a pamphlet would have a useful effect which argued that, if we could stick the first two months, we should win through. By the middle of August half a dozen drafts had been circulated to innumerable experts, whose emendations had not been reconciled when war broke out, and the Ministry moved from Belgravia to Bloomsbury. But although the *Blitzkrieg* had not materialised, the process of improving *The Struggle Ahead* went quietly on. In the middle of October it was noticed that both the title and the argument were slightly dated and the pamphlet was shelved, to be rediscovered and re-edited at the beginning of December after one of the Ministry's periodic reorganisations. Some doubt was expressed whether the pamphlet, in spite of its "improvements"—by now it must have reached at least its twelfth unpublished edition—was worth publishing, but these were brushed aside by Lord Macmillan. With this history behind it, it is no surprise that *The Assurance of Victory* is not a perfect pamphlet. Its successors will be no better so long as there are politicians and Permanent Officials at the top of the Ministry who think that pamphlets can be produced at the leisurely pace and in the same style as departmental memos. We hope that Mr. R. A. Bevan, the new head of the Production Division, will be able to put a stop to this sort of thing. If he can overcome the charming incompetence above him, the man whose advertisements made Guinness a household word may be able to popularise even the Ministry of Information.

The Agricultural Muddle

Every week brings fresh evidence of the confusion and distress caused by the Government's agricultural "policy." The outbreak of war made the switch-over to a new agricultural economy inevitable. This meant for the farmer a cut in the use of imported feeding-stuffs, and the transformation of, for example, the pig-factory into a self-sufficient unit. Such a transformation, if it was not to cause grievous hardship and dislocation, should have been carried through gradually; and this would have

been possible if the Government had taken Sir Arthur Salter's advice and laid in a store of feeding-stuffs. Since this was not done, pig and poultry breeders in wide areas are now in great difficulties and the market is glutted with half-fattened pigs and eating chickens. Since dealers will only supply the limited feed available on cash terms, many small men have been forced to slaughter their stock, instead of converting gradually from the factory to the farmyard pig and from the poultry-farm to the farmyard hen. The same thing is happening to the dairy farmers and the beef-producers. An absurd shortage of feed in many counties may well put out of business the farmer with an economic unit but a small credit margin, as well as those whose unit was no longer economic. Here again instead of a gradual change over, there has been a forced slaughter of heifers and heifer calves which may react seriously on our milk supply. Inadvertently the Government has begun a revolution in English farming, the last stronghold of the eighteenth-century small-scale producer, and is permitting it to take place with a maximum of suffering. Unless speedy assistance is forthcoming there will be full employment in the Bankruptcy Courts; and, paradoxically enough, some form of land nationalisation may be forced on Mr. Chamberlain if he is to avoid a complete breakdown.

Repression in France

We publish to-day a letter from Paris which states some of the facts little known in England about the repression of thought and speech in France. The suppression of liberty has gone a long way. Right wing journalists like Pertinax and de Kerillis are censored almost as ruthlessly as those of the moderate Left. *Le Populaire*, edited by M. Blum, circulates under difficulties, while the Communist press only circulates underground. The conditions of internment in France are said to be extremely bad, and the camps hold many Liberals and other anti-Fascists, as well as those who have been suspected of espionage or who have advocated violent revolution. It is shocking that any genuine opponent of the Nazis should be interned, and it is a serious omen for democracy when deputies are imprisoned. France, in fact, has taken refuge in a dictatorship on the model of the Roman Republic in time of emergency and put democracy into cold storage for the duration.

That this damages the Allied cause cannot be doubted. But the first thing for us in England is to understand the reasons for the French reaction. It must be remembered that whereas Britain has always emphasised liberty and meant by liberty, most of all, the rights of minorities, the French have emphasised equality and stressed rather the constitutional right of the majority to use its full legal powers against a dissident minority. In exercising what they regard as the rights of sovereign people over the minority, the French do not feel that they have surrendered their democracy; the French Republic has always been based upon the Radical peasantry who form her dominant class, and in suppressing a minority in wartime the average Frenchman never fears that he may himself be becoming a Fascist. As long as the tradition and structure of the Republic remains intact he is prepared to give up many of his liberties in a time of war. Secondly, it must be remembered that the Communists have offered a terribly convenient opportunity to the forces of reaction.

It was they who led the hue and cry against all those who were prepared to make terms with Hitler; it was they who denounced the *Munichois* as Fifth Columnists and traitors to their country. The Communists gained their electoral success largely by a display of energetic patriotism. It was only after the war had actually begun and when Stalin's troops had entered Poland, that they decisively turned round to oppose the war, for which only a few weeks before they had offered enthusiastic support. Few non-Communist Frenchmen can see why Hitler is less dangerous to France because he has made an agreement with Stalin; the French authorities are able to argue that the fury of the French populace against the Communists would have passed all bounds if the Government had not taken drastic action against them. Thirdly, it should be noticed that the Socialists were so weakened by their divisions on the issue of Munich, and so disillusioned as a result of collaboration with the Communists in the Popular Front, that even those who wished to preserve free speech were in no strong position to resist dangerously repressive measures, though behind the scenes they may do something to stem the flow of reaction. Trade Union leaders who were alarmed at Communist penetration welcomed the internment of those who sought to oust them from their positions. Here, indeed, was a heaven sent opportunity for clerical and capitalist reaction.

One unfortunate result of this reaction in France is to increase the difficulties of those who hope for a negotiated peace rather than a war for a sterile victory. Questioned in detail, more intelligent Communists both in this country and in France say that they desire to overthrow Hitler and to oppose Fascism; they see the forces of reaction growing in their own countries and the anti-Socialist forces gathering for an extension of the war against the U.S.S.R. They seem unable to see that their own conduct and the aggressive policy of Stalin is bringing about the evil that they denounce. They declare—and we agree with them—that no good can come from support of the present British and French governments. They have bitterly denounced as Trotskyites all those who during recent years have put the evils of war before the evils of Hitler's advance, and they have declared that bad as British and French imperialism are, they are infinitely to be preferred to the extension of Nazi power. To-day they denounce the imperialism of governments which are at length opposing Hitler's advance. They behave exactly as the P.O.U.M. did in Spain. No line of policy could be so calculated to strengthen the position of Daladier or Chamberlain; nothing can be done so likely to damage those elements which are anxious for a peace that is not imperialist. The result of Communist policy is vastly to increase the difficulties of reasonable men, and to suggest to most Frenchmen who are not revolutionaries and who desire to overthrow Hitler that there is no choice before them except bloody revolution or imperial victory. Their present tactics accentuate the drive towards reaction.

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THE AIR MINISTRY AND THE CLIPPER

LAST week we called attention to the fact that the Air Ministry finds itself unable to provide an air service to Lisbon to connect with the tri-weekly pan-American clipper service across the Atlantic. We can understand that to the Air Ministry our commercial interests and our relations with the Americas may seem of secondary importance compared with the efficient prosecution of the war. A Service Department is, in its very nature, bound to adopt this attitude. But it is disturbing that Cabinet Ministers, who are supposed to be able to correct the departmentalism of their Service Chiefs, should have also disregarded the advice of those who urged a broader view. Last summer we and the Americans, in friendly rivalry, had at last launched our Transatlantic Air Services. The enterprise had caught the imagination of the public on both sides and had already done something to break down the sense of remoteness which has been one of the main obstacles to an American understanding of Britain. Soon after war broke out the American Clippers, which are forbidden to enter the war zone, were forced to make their crossing to Lisbon, while the British service from Foynes was discontinued at the end of September for the winter months. This meant that the only means of speedy communication between New York on the one side and Paris and London on the other was now the Lisbon service.

It was possible to arrange a service of flying-boats from Southampton to Lisbon via Bordeaux. Such a service would have cut in half the time for mail (including the diplomatic bag) and for passengers between London and New York. But the Air Ministry is adamant; and to-day the American citizen who arrives post-haste at Lisbon must either wait for a convoy or, since General Franco forbids the passage of the aircraft of belligerent countries over Spain, submit to the delays and humiliations of search at two Spanish frontiers, or lastly, travel by a French line to Oran in N. Africa, whence he can reach London at long last via Marseilles and Paris.

It might be supposed that this is merely one isolated piece of departmental stupidity. But unfortunately it is typical of the policy which the Air Ministry has chosen to adopt to civil aviation; and it illustrates only too clearly the Government's attitude to the wider aspects of the war. The same story has been repeated in numberless instances where the interests of the home-front or of foreign trade cut across the convenience of the Services. We discuss it in detail because it is a symptom of a far greater evil.

At the beginning of the war civil aviation suffered like every other commercial activity. Imperial Airways and British Airways—for the Airways Corporation has not yet been called into existence—were evacuated to Bristol; and by an order under Section 7 of the Air Navigation Act, 1920, the civil air companies were brought under the control of the Air Ministry which formed a special branch called National Air Communications to look after them. But even before September the attitude of the Service Departments to civil aviation had been clearly indicated. Though the transatlantic service had been successfully launched, the Government did not spare Imperial Airways the ignominy of telling the world in August that it was curtailing bookings on the outward Empire routes. This curtailment was due to a shortage of machines which could have been purchased from the U.S.A., if the Government had so desired. But the Air Ministry was too busy preparing for defence to consider the possibility of maintaining and expanding our civil aviation. It regarded such things as superfluous luxuries.

Though the outbreak of war did not interrupt the Empire service, the control by the Air Ministry has meant that on every occasion priority has been given to defence. The few machines which the two companies possess have been frequently chartered for special services—such as taking Cabinet Ministers over to France—which could perfectly well have been performed by R.A.F. machines; and the ocean flying-boats, which could have been used to connect with the Clippers at Lisbon, have been doing odd jobs for the Services. While a poor country like Germany (although it cannot buy planes from abroad) has been expanding its commercial aviation during the war, the British Government has been content to maintain the Empire service, in collaboration with Air France to resume the interrupted Paris service, and finally to run a line via Stavanger and Oslo to Stockholm, neglecting altogether the Balkans and the Americas. Moreover, although months before war broke out all the arrangements for taking over the two companies by the new public utility, Airways Corporation, had been completed, the appointed day has been repeatedly postponed and as we write no one knows when it will be.

We are waging a war of siege and counter-siege in which the development of our own and the curtailment of Nazi trade are at least of equal importance with defence operations. Though commercial aviation is not likely at once to become a paying concern, as Treasury officials understand those words, its importance for British prestige abroad is immense. But publicity is the affair of the Ministry of Information, commerce of the Board of Trade, aviation of the Air Ministry, and the development of civil aviation falls flat beween these departmental stools.

It is not difficult to see where the mistake lies. To put civil aviation under the control of the Air Ministry is as mistaken as it would be to put our shipping under the control of the Admiralty. Before the establishment of the Ministry of Shipping, the Merchant Navy was controlled by the Mercantile Marine Department of the Board of Trade, and in our opinion there is no chance of development for civil aviation until the Government fixes the appointed day on which the Airways Corporation shall start functioning and entrusts its departmental supervision to the Board of Trade. Were this done, the difficulties in the way of a connecting service with the Clippers, which the Air Ministry now finds insurmountable, would vanish overnight.

But there is a wider aspect of this problem. Last week, M. Daladier rightly stressed that any realistic plans for "federal union" must spring from the actual economic and financial co-operation which is now being developed between France and this country, and stated that the Anglo-French system was open to any other country which was prepared to collaborate on equal terms. In no sphere are the arguments for internationalisation stronger than in that of civil aviation. Already the Paris service is being jointly run by the French and British companies. Both from the point of view of efficient prosecution of the war and from the point of view of the peaceful reconstruc-

tion of Europe, there is an overwhelming case for the pooling of British and French commercial aviation. And now is the moment. Before the Airways Corporation settles down into a vested interest with its own insular traditions, it could be made part of a new European Airways Corporation, an international public utility controlled by an Anglo-French Committee, and serving the countries of Europe, the British Commonwealth and the French Empire; and it could be made clear that an enlargement of the Corporation to include the air services of other countries would be welcomed.

There is a tendency to-day to draw a sharp dividing line between the job of winning the war and that of reconstructing Europe when the war has been won. This is a false distinction. Unless, as M. Daladier has observed, we have the vision to lay the foundations now of European co-operation, we shall neither win the war nor be able to perform our peaceful reconstruction. The Government is anxious to maintain the sympathy of America for the French and British cause. Nothing can more easily lose that sympathy than such obstructionism as the Air Ministry has shown to the proposed Lisbon service; nothing would strengthen it more surely than that we should stop talking generalities about justice and international co-operation in the future and begin now, while the war is being fought, to develop the civil aviation of the British and French Empires on truly international lines. It is a job worth doing: it could be done: but it will not be done, unless men of vision and imagination are given the control.

PAYING FOR THE WAR

WITH prices already rising sharply, and one group after another of workers demanding wage-increases sufficient to meet the higher cost of living, we are already some way along the road that leads to the familiar spiral of inflationary finance. What else, indeed, is to be expected when, after four months of war and war expenditure, we are still entirely in the dark about the Government's financial policy? That we are in the dark is undoubted; and it seems highly probable that our lack of illumination is due to the fact that the Government is as much in the dark as ourselves. At all events, Sir John Simon, in his reviews of wartime finance, has not advanced beyond stating the problem and appealing to the public to rise to the heights of sacrifice which are about to be demanded of it. To be sure, his immediate references in this connection have been mainly to the payers of income and surtax, with whom he doubtless feels the keenest sympathy. But he has ventured to hint that sacrifices will be expected of the classes below the income-tax level, though their form of sacrifice has remained hitherto undefined.

Broadly, as Mr. Keynes has pointed out in the one constructive contribution that has yet been made to the problem, the task before the Government is that of finding, at pre-war prices, from £1,500 to £2,000 millions more for public purposes than was being found in peacetime, when the gross taxable income of the country was about £5,700 millions in all. It is not, indeed, necessary to find the whole of the increase out of current production; for we can realise some of it by sales of gold and foreign securities and some more by decreases in stocks of goods. We can also release out of current production a part of what has previously gone to meeting charges for depreciation and renewals of capital equipment, and we can reduce our current new investment on capital goods not required by the Government for war purposes (e.g., houses). We can even probably do some net borrowing from abroad—at any rate from the Dominions. But when we have made the most of all these sources—some of which can be tapped only once, and not recurrently—we shall be left with a heavy war bill that can be met only out of the current production of this country.

This being unavoidable, it is as plain as can be that our first and most essential task is to bring about the largest possible increase in our own production. It is monstrous that, after four months of war and the calling-up of huge numbers of workers for war service, we have still nearly as much unemployment as when the war began. The persons out of work are quite largely different; and new depressed areas have replaced the old; but unemployment, which ought by now hardly to exist, has merely changed its form, moving from the coalfields and the industrial North to London and to the centres of the lighter consumers' trades and to the services dislocated by war conditions.

The importance of this unemployment lies not only in the waste of resources, which in view of the heavy demands upon us we cannot afford to waste, but also in its effects upon the public mind. As long as there is plainly a surplus of unused labour and capital, it will be quite impossible to get the ordinary man to think seriously about the problems of war finance, or to recognise the necessity for any drastic economies in consumption beyond what are directly forced upon him by his personal financial condition. Economists such as Mr. Keynes may demonstrate with the utmost clarity what is certain to happen if matters of war finance are allowed merely to slide: the ordinary man will not be persuaded of the need for any drastic action at his own expense as long as the Government, with apparent tranquillity of mind, continues to leave an appreciable part of the resources of production unused.

Of course, in effect, this failure to make full use of our resources aggravates the problem, by diminishing the total real income out of which the war bill has to be met. But it also helps to defer the problem, and still more to conceal it, by enforcing reduced consumption on those who fall out of work and thus offsetting the increased consuming power of those whose incomes have been made larger by war employment. It is partly on this account, and partly because we have been using up pre-war stocks of goods, that shortage of supplies has not yet become apparent except here and there. The price-controls imposed on many classes of goods at the outbreak of war have yet to be tested against conditions of general shortage. Most people probably still imagine that, apart from the limited number of goods to be brought under rationing schemes, supplies will continue sufficient, at any rate in the sense that the consumer, even if he cannot always get exactly what he wants, will be able without difficulty to purchase a quite tolerable substitute.

In other words, the need for restricting total consumption, as distinct from consumption of certain particular things, is not accepted by the people. Nor is it likely to be, until there is plain evidence that our resources are being subjected to a serious strain. If nothing is done, in the end economy in consumption will be ruthlessly enforced by a rise in prices with which it will be impossible for wages (and still more for more rigid forms of income) to keep pace. But this solution of the problem by inflation, which is politically the easiest, works with gross unfairness to the recipients of fixed incomes and to those wage-earners whose economic pull is least under conditions of war. It results in inflated profits for the entrepreneurs, and in high revenue for the Exchequer. But, as Mr. Keynes forcibly points out, it means that even the more fortunate sections among the wage-earners have to work much harder for no real increase in consuming power.

This is the background against which Mr. Keynes sets his proposal for what is in effect a forced loan of about £400 millions a year from every income-receiver who gets more than a necessary minimum standard of life. The exempted minimum Mr. Keynes puts tentatively at 35*s.* a week for a single man and 45*s.* for a married man, with an allowance of 7*s.* 6*d.* for each child. On all incomes above this level he proposes a levy at a rising rate, up to 80 per cent. on

the largest, the proceeds of the levy to be applied first to payment of taxes, and the balance credited to a blocked account, bearing interest at 2½ per cent., and due for release at some period after the war, when it might come in very useful in providing increased purchasing power during a post-war slump.

Obviously, the details of this proposal could be varied in a great number of ways. The essence of it, however, is quite simple. In face of the Government's needs, the main body of the population cannot have increased consuming power during the war. It can have more money income only to the accompaniment of a rise in prices, which will leave it at best no better off than before. As compensation for forgoing a higher real income in the present, Mr. Keynes wants to give the main body of the workers a promise of purchasing power to come; and he argues forcibly that such a promise is a great deal better than the nothing that is the only real alternative.

Undoubtedly, Mr. Keynes is right, both in his approach to the problem and in his broad conclusions. But, despite the failure of anybody, in any camp, to produce a constructive alternative to his proposals, there does not appear to be, in any quarter, enthusiasm for his scheme. The capitalist classes dislike it, because it threatens them with higher taxation and a loss of the prospective windfall gains of inflation. The middle classes dislike it, because Sir John Simon is at present letting them down very lightly, and they are still much more reluctant to face extra taxation (even in the form of forced saving) than frightened of an inflationary rise in prices. Finally, the Trade Unions are suspicious of it, because they fear that if, as part of the scheme, they assent to limiting their claims to wage advances, inflation may come all the same; and also because they suspect that they may be tricked out of the carrot which Mr. Keynes wishes the Chancellor to dangle in front of them.

Politically, then, the prospects of Mr. Keynes being listened to are not bright. But the fact remains that he has put forward what is, as far as we can see, the only practicable way of financing the war without either an inflationary rise in prices, such as occurred between 1914 and 1917, or a fundamental change in the basis of the economic system. There is another way of paying for the war without inflation; but it is not a way that could conceivably be taken either by the present Government or by any Government that could at present command a parliamentary majority. For this other way would be for the State to take over the main industries lock, stock and barrel, and run them as public services wholly cut away from the restrictions of the profit motive; and therewith for the State to assume full control over the level of prices and the distribution of incomes, reserving what it needed for war purposes before deciding how much real income it could afford to release for spending by the rest of the people. Or, if this is too sweeping, still some near approach to such a Socialist system of production and distribution is in truth the only practicable, non-inflationary alternative to what Mr. Keynes suggests.

Of course, this is, at any rate in theory, just what the leaders of the Labour Party would like. But the difficulties of transition to it, in wartime, would be formidable at best; and it is, for the present, excluded by the political situation. The immediate alternatives that remain are inflation and the Keynes scheme, or some variant of it; and it is a safe guess that, of the two, inflation, up to a point, will be tried first. Sir John Simon will do all he can to keep wage increases in check, and something (but less than he could) to hold down prices. He will raise some of the money he requires by borrowing in excess of both current savings and increases of bank credit corresponding to actual increases in production—that is, by inflation. He will, perhaps, try a further dose of taxation in the spring, but with the knowledge that no mere expansion of the existing tax system can bridge the gap. He will carry on in this way, hoping very likely that the war will end before he is compelled to face up fairly and squarely to his final dilemma.

A LONDON DIARY

IT is a pleasure to compare the lay-out (and the grammar) of the leaflets recently dropped in Germany with those composed inside the Air Ministry in the early days of the war. The new *Wolkiger Beobachter*, "The Observer from the clouds" (a pun on *Völkischer*) has just the scrubby appearance of its prototype, though, of course, it is of a miniature size, and the copy I saw was cheered up by a Low cartoon. There is no doubt that the people who composed it have done the job they were set extremely well. Whether the job is rightly conceived is not so certain. I thought it was too obviously the propaganda of an enemy, and doubted whether those who picked up such leaflets were those who would be readily affected by the argument (stressed all through) that Hitler had betrayed them by allying himself with the Bolsheviks. The first object of all propaganda should be to give the Germans essential news which they do not get from Dr. Goebbels about this country and about their own; and as part of this news should be a statement, constantly reiterated, of war aims. Every German should know that he can have peace on honourable terms as soon as the Nazis will let him. In this leaflet the back page contained an obituary notice of Von Fritsch (in true German style) which was clever, but I doubt whether satire of this sort does us much good. The best propaganda from our point of view is first of all facts, soberly and reliably reported, and secondly sincere statements of our beliefs and aims.

* * *

Recently I had a conversation with a Fascist who had joined up with Sir Oswald Mosley and talked very freely of his plans. There was, as he said, no need for reticence since there was no secrecy about the programme. For the same reason there is no need for me to be reticent. He spoke with some confidence about the success of the word "refujew," which was going over well in places like Manchester, Leeds and the East End of London, where there is already a prejudice against Jews. The refujews are of course responsible for the war, control international finance, created Bolshevism and so on and so forth. "Of course," he said, "we should not use such a line of propaganda in Hertford or Hereford; there some quite different grievance has to be exploited, tithes or whatnot." I asked him whether he believed all this stuff about the Jews. He said that it did not matter at all whether it was true or not, all that mattered was whether it went over and brought grist to the Fascist mill. "The truth of what you say is of no importance at all?" "None at all," he assured me. "Are you equally indifferent to the incidental results of your propaganda?" I asked. "If for instance a large number of innocent and helpless people are mobbed and beaten up or murdered as a result of your lies, that doesn't worry you either?" "Not in the slightest," he said. "Somebody has to suffer in any revolution and it may as well be the Jews. The end justifies the means." "But what," I said, "is the end?" The end was Fascist power, but I could not find that he had any clear idea of what they would do with power when they got it. "The end would no doubt justify the means if the means would achieve the end," I said, "but don't you see that these means will not produce any end that you desire?" "How is that?" he asked. "Well," I said, "if you tell me that you will always lie in order to do down your opponents and don't mind how much suffering and misery you cause, if you will indeed stop at nothing, then there is no social or moral relationship between us?" "No," he said, "that is so, if we are on opposite sides." "Then," I said, "I know that you will choose some convenient moment when my back is turned to stick a knife into it." "Yes," he said, "if it suits me." "Do you not see then that that leaves me with no alternative but to seek a moment when I can conveniently destroy you before you destroy me, and that in such circumstances all loyalty, decency, mutual trust and, indeed, all the foundations of any stable society disappear?" He agreed that that was a difficulty. "Even supposing you do get power,

then," I said, " you will all have won by treachery and violence and none of you will trust each other. Each of you will know that the other is ready to stick a knife into his neighbour's back the moment it suits him. The only possible result of such tactics of revolution is that you will go through the experience of Germany and Russia, suspicions lead to " informing " and informing to plotting and plotting to purges and blood-baths and so on to more blood-baths until finally you get to Rauschning's Nihilism." He seemed a bit bothered about this. It was, he said, a real snag.

* * *

There is no longer a B.U.F., but only a British Union. Fascist, sounds foreign and has been dropped. If there is an election the Fascists I gather, will contest it as Unionists and hope to gather in many Tory votes. Assuming that the war will be unpopular, they hope to cash in on the dislike of the old political parties and the hatred of Jews and Communists. As to the Communists, my informant said their methods and immediate objects were very much like those of the Fascists. They were rivals for power and would have later on to be drastically dealt with. In the meantime there is a hooligan element which can move from one Party to the other as it did in pre-Hitlerite Germany. (I know of a wall in North-West London on which is painted: " Up B.U. and C.P."). From various sources I gather that the Fascists do not by any means despair of success. Some of their sources of money have been cut off since the war began, but they have on their side the general attack on reason, the disillusionment with old cries, the easy belief that big Powers will always absorb small nations, so that it is not worth worrying about Poland or Finland and the rest, and the absence of any alternative dynamic, except that of the Communists which they hope to use as a foil. I have had some corroboration recently of an account given not long ago in the House of Commons of the new Fascist tactic. Since they lost their uniforms they do not go in for mass membership, but concentrate on propaganda amongst the middle-class and in the Trade Unions. They have, of course, friends high up in society who may come in useful some day. The new technique, I'm told, is to send men round to pubs at night in particular districts, with instructions to create anti-Semitism. These men will drop in for a pint and begin, as if accidentally, discussing the war and suggest that the Jews are the cause of all our troubles. They do not argue, but merely say that the Army is clothed by one Jew, supplied by a second, fed by a third, with a Jewish War Minister at the head. Having spread their bit of sweetness and light, they crawl off to the next pub to do the same there. There is plenty of discontent, plenty of inflammatory material lying about and they hope gradually to build up some fixed prejudices and passions which will come in handy when the time comes. I say all this not because I think it will succeed, but because it is well that we should be aware that England is not necessarily immune from the incalculable disaster that happened in Germany.

* * *

Here is an extract from a letter that reached me from Stockholm.

> Our situation is very precarious. Many of us consider it better to help the Finns at once while their army still possesses its full striking power before we have to fight in our own country. It is generally believed that as soon as we send our troops to Finland, Germany will attack in the South. There are rumours of an ultimatum to that effect. It is expected everywhere that the Russians will try to overrun us after capturing Finland. People are also talking of maps made in Germany where Sweden is divided between Germany and Russia, the frontier being the big river valley, 150 kilometres north of Stockholm. If Russia and Germany divide Scandinavia, what will be the fate of England? Can there be any salvation for any of us, England and France included, if the Western Powers do not recognise the importance of the Scandinavian view? Prerequisite for action is that Sweden and Norway should ally themselves with England and France. We are not yet ripe for such policy, but the ripening process can be hurried up if England and France let us understand their decision to help Finland seriously and effectively. Russia's bombs have been found to contain sand. Corruption seems to be still alive in the old Russian style. They seem to have the old Tzarist tactics of driving masses forward to attack against well protected lines. They are said to have no ambulances, their wounded being left to die in the snow at 15 to 20 degrees below zero. Some think that sooner or later we must get into the war against Russia and that we ought to enter into conversations with the U.S.A. If they are not prepared for the destruction of Scandinavia, they should tell Germany that if it touches Scandinavia it would mean war. Then it would be easier to persuade people to help the Finns before it is too late. Germany may no longer be afraid of Russia and may think Stalin's advance doesn't matter because his gains can be taken from him after the war.

* * *

Lady Constance Malleson sends me the following information for those who wish to contribute to medical aid in Finland.

> Money for Finland's Red Cross: to G. L. d'Abo, Hon. Treasurer, Anglo-Finnish Society, c/o Hambros Bank, 41 Bishopsgate, E.C.2.
>
> Money for the Swedish Brigade (*Svensk Frivilligkar*): to any Swedish newspaper: *Socialdemokraten, Stockholm* (Socialist). *Arbetet, Malmö, Sweden* (Trade Union). *Arbetaren, Stockholm* (Syndicalist). *Dagens Nyheter, Stockholm* (Liberal). *Svenska Dagbladet, Stockholm* (Conservative). Envelopes to be marked, *Till Svensk Frivilligkar.*

* * *

Until the invasion of Finland, I had not come across the Socialist Clarity Group. Then someone showed me an extremely sensible appeal which they had issued on this subject; and now I have received number 7 of their *Labour Discussion Notes*, which seems to me an admirably objective attempt to use the Marxist analysis without swallowing all the superstitions of Marxism. It includes a cautious estimate of the extent to which British capitalism will be undermined by war-economy and a shrewd critique of Mr. Attlee's pronouncement on war-aims, as well as a long historical sketch of Soviet developments both internally and in foreign policy. One of the points in favour of these Discussion Notes is that you can't label them as the product of any " wing " or " deviation "; they are the work of a few Socialists who are really trying to think for themselves—and that is rare enough these days to make them worth mentioning. They cost 2*d.* a time and the address is 4 Crown Court, Crown Street, Harrow.

* * *

I am sorry that no one has even approached the standard required for a prize in the competition for suitable Christmas gifts for famous people. A few bright ideas emerged here and there in the entries. Göring was offered a barrage-balloon and a fig-leaf; Sir John Simon, it was thought, would be suitably rewarded with a 30 h.p. car; Von Neurath is to get a " blank Czech," Tom Handley a gag, Sir John Anderson a glow-worm, and a politician (whose name I would on no account mention) was offered a box of Damaroids. Someone suggested that Mr. Chamberlain should be given a copy of his own last year's Christmas card.

* * *

An Italian paper quotes from a French source the story that when King George was recently in the British lines in France, he was greeted with the tune of " God Save the King " from the German trenches.

* * *

I take this from the *Times*.

> The Government have decreed that 1939 shall pass out quietly. . . .

Very proper.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mrs. Connolly.

All cuttings should be addressed to " This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

> In Madrid, too, life is nearly normal again. General Franco has done a wonderful job of reconstruction in the battered capital. The Ritz and three floors of the Palace are open and newly decorated. —*Tatler.*

> Councillor Mell, continuing, read an extract from the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION commenting upon the dangers of restricting discussion, when he was informed that his speech had exceeded the time limit, but that he could be allowed two more minutes.—*Kentish Times.*

My husband is a jolly good sort, one of those very hearty men. He wears plus-fours, smokes a long pipe, and talks about nothing but beer and Rugby football. My nerves won't stand much more of it.—*A wife at Tottenham Police Court.*

Books for students in arms. There will be a wide choice of subjects and every care will be taken to see that nothing of a subversive type is included, either by way of books or pamphlets.—The *Times.*

Beauty spots should, of course, be preserved wherever practicable. But the most arresting form of beauty I can envisage at the present moment is an R.A.F. bomber, waiting to avenge a dreaded attack on our township.—Correspondent in *Southern Daily Echo.*

But the Germans who matter, those under forty years of age, have been brought up in the belief that Great Britain is their hereditary enemy. Nothing but a sound thrashing will convince them of that error.—Field-Marshal Lord Milne in the *Evening Standard.*

West End solicitors, who before the war netted five figure incomes from divorce cases, have been heavily hit by the black-out. In the winter months, at any rate, private inquiry agents are helpless. Adultery cannot be proved because identification is impossible in the pitch dark.—*Reynolds News.*

And we ask you not to give your name and address to the Co-op shops. The Co-ops fight the little shopkeepers, while the butchers and the butchers' boys go out to fight Hitler.

The butchers have helped to make British history through the centuries.

Who was Shakespeare? A butcher's son who became a butcher's boy.

What have the Co-ops given the nation?

Double, double,
Toil and trouble. *Daily Express.*

IRISH GUNPOWDER

THE daring armed raid on the Magazine Fort, Phœnix Park, Dublin, when about fifty young men succeeded—just before Christmas—in seizing 28 tons of small arms ammunition or roughly 1,250,000 rounds, has roused the Government to immediate action. Since Christmas, Dublin and much of the country resembles a war zone with cordons of soldiers holding bridges, all traffic held up and "comb out" searches being carried on in houses and premises in various areas. To date, some 3 tons of ammunition has been recovered and two abandoned lorries have been found. The raiders arrived in motor lorries at the Magazine and overpowered the guard.

Ever since the war in Europe began, Ireland has prided itself on its peaceful atmosphere. Shops in Dublin were bright with twinkling lights, cinemas blazed with Neon pencillings. Eire was a peace zone. All that has changed now. Coming into the city I saw a cordon of green-clad soldiers, armed with rifles, stretching across the road. A military tender stood at the side. A private motor car was halted in the middle of the road, one door swinging open, while the passengers had to get out. Then the military stopped a bus and soldiers walked through, examining the baggage. Similar military posts held all the main roads. No one could get in or out of the city without scrutiny. Bayonets were thrust into loads of sand, hay and grain. Even funerals were held up until the papers were produced. All day and all night the soldiers are on duty, lighting camp fires in the streets. Trains and canal boats are also searched.

Thousands of soldiers and volunteers, assisted by hundreds of police, are engaged in the search through the country. Troops from the Curragh patrol the roads. Machine guns, lorries and armoured cars have been pressed into service. The town of Naas has been established as military headquarters. Sentries guard approaches to the barracks while cars and lorries, loaded with troops, dash in and out.

A reward of a thousand pounds has been offered by the Government for the missing ammunition. A Military Court is inquiring into the raid. The Dail has been summoned specially to strengthen the legal powers of the Government in dealing with seditious activities. Quite recently the courts decided that the Government had no powers to imprison suspects without charge or trial and, as a result, a number of young men were released. The judge's decision was confirmed by a higher court which dismissed the Government's appeal. Under the Eire Constitution the right of a citizen to a trial is safeguarded except in the event of war or civil war. As Eire has declared its neutrality in the present conflict, no wartime powers of internment are possible without special provision which, it may be assumed, will now be made.

From a legal standpoint the decision of Judge Gavan Duffy, who has ruled that certain provisions of the Offences Against the State Act are inoperative, is of great interest and importance. It is the first case in which the Constitution has been appealed to in the courts. One result of having a written Constitution is that the courts are following the American rather than the British practice. Before the armed raid took place, this point was regarded as largely of theoretical interest. Now it is recognised that the State is in need of immediate powers of defence.

What does the seizing of ammunition mean? Is there to be civil war in Ireland? These questions are being asked on every hand. It is, of course, difficult to prophesy about a situation which changes so rapidly. Yesterday Ireland seemed the most peaceful country in Europe. Now it is on a war footing and soldiers are everywhere. But in spite of swift transitions, it must be said that the prospect of civil war appears so remote that it is hardly an outside possibility.

A small minority is evidently ready to challenge Governmental authority to the extent of seizing arms. But this conforms to the Irish instinct for drama rather than to any serious possibility of revolt. Before the war the I.R.A.—the only intransigent body proclaiming its right to use arms—declared categorically that it did not intend to fight on Irish territory. Civil war was rejected. No revised statement of policy has since been issued. Unless the seizure of arms is regarded in itself as a new proclamation, the old policy still stands.

In Ireland, rebel activities have a knack of conforming to a previous pattern. It may be recalled that during the Easter Rising of 1916 a group of rebels attacked the Magazine Fort and exploded some of the ammunition there. The present activity may be a case of following tradition. Yet undoubtedly the seizure of such a quantity of ammunition is a serious matter and the Government is taking it seriously. It is within the bounds of possibility that the raiders contemplate some armed demonstration of an anti-border character.

Any stunt of this kind would be strongly condemned by the mass of opinion in the South and sternly repressed by the de Valera Government. For himself and his party Mr. de Valera made it clear at the annual conference of Fianna Fail a few weeks ago that the solution of the border question is dependent on the goodwill of Britain. Any display of military force, any suggestion of bullying or threats, said Mr. de Valera, can only defeat the cause of Irish unity by increasing hostility in Britain and in Northern Ireland. Consequently he may be relied upon to take the strongest possible line against attempts to stir up trouble in the North, especially when this is combined with a challenge to the authority of his own Government.

R. M. Fox (author of *Green Banners*)

EQUALITY IN EATING

THOUGH I believe in the principle of rationing in wartime, I wonder whether it is fair to other people. I have not myself an inordinate desire for meat. As a rule I would rather have less than more of what I see on my plate. I can face an underdone steak but not with the rapture of a lion at his dinner. If there were no meat to be had I could be content to live on fish or even vegetables. Not that I have never felt the first stirrings of enthusiasm at sight of roast pork and apple

sauce on a winter's day or of that undervalued dish, boiled mutton sauced with capers. But I am constitutionally deficient in the virtue of gluttony. I am a sprinter, not a long distance runner, where food is concerned. My energy wanes after a fair-sized cutlet. Overeating for the pleasure of overeating is an experience—and how enviable an experience!—that I have not known since I was a child.

Yet, according to the system of rationing—at least, according to any rigid and thoroughgoing system of rationing—my half-hearted appetite is counted equal to that of a sixteen-stone trencherman who could eat his way through a butcher's shop in a week. No allowance is made for the fact that he has gone through life with abnormal cravings—that by playing Rugby football in youth and golf in middle-age, he has grown a stomach that demands to be constantly replenished with the fuel of flesh. He can eat two steaks to my one and still feel hungry. Yet the authorities register us on the same level of appetite. They treat us as if we were cups of equal capacity. This seems to me to be about as reasonable as it would be to allot the same amount of petrol to a high-powered car and a baby Austin. A deputation of gluttons should approach the Minister of Food on the subject and point out to him the irrationalities of rationing. Equality, rightly interpreted, is a noble ideal; but, in a Utopia of equality, no one would suggest that a man of six-feet-four should be compelled to wear trousers of the same length as a man of five-feet-two.

Mr. Morrison might reply to this with the suggestion that, while rationing lasts, those of us who have small appetites ought to share our beef, butter and bacon with those who have large. The scheme looks excellent on paper, but it would not work for the simple reason that, as soon as rationing begins, we men with small appetites begin to grow peckish. This is another proof of the contrariness of human nature. It cannot be denied, however, that it is the overloaded table that takes away the appetite and that the sight of a too Spartan table affects the imagination in an opposite manner till one feels that one could eat like a wolf. How often towards the end of the last war I longed for more! With prohibition there comes a craving.

For this reason I doubt whether the good trencherman is likely to get much help during the war from the men of little appetite. With the restrictions they have begun to enjoy eating. They might gladly have parted with their breakfast bacon a year ago, but not to-day. They notice as if for the first time, its peculiar fragrance, its tang on the palate, its spirit-raising satisfaction. It is not a food so much as a symbol. It warms the heart even more than the body. And, after all, it is food that our Gargantuan friends need, and, according to the dietitians, there are plenty of foods that are more valuable than bacon. One dietitian has been pouring scorn on bacon and butter, and telling us that we should be much healthier if we left such things alone and ate oatmeal porridge and milk instead. When I read this, I remembered how a great Scottish physician once told me that Carlyle's dyspepsia was the result of his passion for oatmeal porridge, and declared that it was food only suitable for hard-working ploughboys. I also remembered, however, that Carlyle lived to a great age, and I imagine that it is good to live to a great age, even with indigestion. I am sure that heavy eaters will be none the worse if they cease grumbling about the shortage of bacon and take to oatmeal porridge. As sugar is rationed, let them eat it in the civilised way—with salt. It tastes better with salt. I speak, not as a porridge-eater, but with the prejudice of one who grew up in a salt-with-porridge country.

Another suggestion for over-eaters who feel hungry comes from an elderly gentleman who lives largely on grass. Apparently he disagrees with Nebuchadnezzar on the subject of grass; he finds it not only wholesome but good. He chops it finely, he declares, and gives it a flavour by adding finely-chopped leeks or carrots to it, and he assures us that he never felt better in his life than since he has adopted this diet. What with income tax at its present level, we may yet all find ourselves compelled to become twentieth-century Nebuchadnezzars. After all, there must be something in grass, for the flesh of the cattle we eat is made of it. Why, then, not eat it in its pure form instead of waiting till it has been vulgarised into uric-acid-forming steaks and chops? The only objection I can see to grass-eating is that grass-eaters seem to have to keep on eating all day. The cow, at least, spends vastly more time over her meals than a human being. Perhaps, in order to be able to afford the time to live on grass, one would need to have a private income.

At the same time, I suspect that our prejudice against a good many kinds of food is due largely to the fact that they are cheap. Porridge, herrings, grass and potatoes—they are all too cheap to attract us as the staple of our diet. The potato, I agree, is given a place of honour as an essential part of a meal; but who that can afford anything more expensive would think of ordering a dinner of potatoes? Yet I know an English doctor who ascribes all the energy of the Irish to their being more than any other nation a potato-eating people. It is to potatoes, not to beef, he says, that the Irish navvy owes his exceptional strength. I see that another doctor has lately been professing agreement with him and proclaiming that the potato, not bread, is the staff of life. He also declared that potatoes are feeding without being fattening. He would admit, I presume, that the potato, as usually boiled in England without its jacket, is as sapless as it is insipid. But I fancy that, if potatoes were a shilling a pound, we should find gourmets making them the main dish of a meal. Anyone who has ever dined in a farmhouse on potatoes and buttermilk will assent to the proposition that even if the potato were not a food it would qualify as a luxury.

With all these cheap foods at our disposal, then, we need not complain of the iniquities of rationing. Hunger is largely a matter of thinking we are hungry, and the meat-eater feels hungry on his wartime allowance mainly because he has come to regard meat as the only barrier against starvation. He is like the woman who feels half-dead if she does not get her cup of early-morning tea or her glass of milk at noon. Still, it is difficult to live happily if we are deprived of half the things that have long been symbols of well-being to us. English people are inclined to sympathise with the Germans because, owing to the tea shortage, they have to fall back on apple-peel tea and camomile tea. But is this so fatal a deprivation? I have seen a rich man in an English hotel ordering camomile tea at bedtime when all the precious fluids of the place were at his disposal. He assured me that it was better than ordinary tea and that it had a high medicinal value. So persuasive was he that, when I returned to London, I bought an ounce of camomile flowers at the chemist's and drank a brew made from them three nights running. After that, the will weakened, and, deciding that camomile tea might be wholesome but it was not good, I returned to what are called spirits. But, on grounds of health there is no need to pity the camomile tea drinker. Let him only think he likes his camomile tea, and he will be none the worse for it.

I confess I should feel much greater alarm if tobacco were rationed than I feel over the rationing of beef, bacon and butter. It is reported that in some German cities smokers are now able to buy from their tobacconists only one cigar each a day. The hunger for tobacco, however, like the hunger for beef, is mental rather than physical. We think tobacco is essential to our happiness and would worry ourselves needlessly if we were deprived of it. Yet, if we could think differently, there is nothing easier than to give up tobacco. I have half made up my mind to change gradually from cigarettes to a pipe and so ultimately to abstinence. What is wrong with the over-smoker as with the over-eater is that he has never learned to appreciate the easiness of the simple life. I am not sure, however, that it is fair during the present crisis to penalise the over-eater without penalising the over-smoker, too. On the other hand, the meat-eater has his offals to make up for the niggardliness of his Sunday roast. But what substitute is there for tobacco? The only substitute for tobacco I ever heard of is going without. Y. Y.

PEACE AIM

I am inclined to think the Führer knows his Germans. Amongst the masses who have nothing at stake there is observable a certain amount of *Schadenfreude.*

Recent events have revealed to me a facet of the German character which I had not suspected. . . . This outbreak of sadistic cruelty.

—Extracts from White Paper, Germany No. 2, 1939

WHEN the war has been finally won,
We are counselled in speeches and sermons,
To make certain that nothing is done
To wound or discourage the Germans.
We must strictly exclude from our aims
Suspicion of punitive measures—
But how can we deal with their claims
To their popular national pleasures?

When regenerate Germany asks,
On resumption of friendly relations,
To shoulder her share of the tasks
That are common to civilized nations,
Can her people abandon the cult
In which they so gleefully revelled
With the not unpredicted result
That they're morally somewhat dishevelled?

What pastimes and games will be left
If humans no longer are hounded,
And arson and slander and theft
By legal deterrents surrounded?
Must they close down their torture-resorts
So greatly enjoyed by S.A. boys
And spoil the legitimate sports
Of Himmler's uproarious playboys?

When the Nazis are held a disgrace
And a scapegoat is made of their saviour,
Can we hope that this thoroughbred race
Will abandon Germanic behaviour,
When even his critics concede
That what made his régime so successful
Was his sense of his countrymen's need
For a hearty debauch in the cesspool?

While we own admiration extreme
For the Germans' historical glories,
Their manner of letting off steam
Shows something's gone wrong with their *mores;*
Their title may not be denied
To their *lieder,* their lager, their treasures—
But can civilization provide
For their rather peculiar pleasures?

SAGITTARIUS

Miscellany

MR. MUNNINGS AND ULTRA-MODERN ART

THAT ingenious and energetic person, the Art Critic of the *Times,* is to be pitied. His job of finding something to say about exhibitions for which there is nothing to be said is hard enough in all conscience. It is aggravated by the fact that, when something can be said, that something is bound to be subtle and not easily expressed in words and yet somehow ought to be made comprehensible to the dullest subscriber. That occasionally he fails is clear. For instance, the other day he wrote an article in which he explained, in language one might have supposed the veriest dunce could understand, that some people sought in a picture a story, whereas others looked for combinations of form and colour which affected them as music affects those blessed with an ear. Mr. Munnings, R.A., did not understand: had he done so he could hardly have supposed that he was "answering" the critic by describing a commonplace visual experience which he seems to have enjoyed on the morning of December 18th before breakfast, by detailing the factual contents of Manet's *Bar,* and by lavishing ignorant and thoughtless abuse on his betters. To examine the lapses in his pair of letters to the *Times* (December 13th and 21st) may seem like flogging one of his own horses; but from the results of the operation may be drawn conclusions which will be of interest, not to Mr. Munnings, but to people who concern themselves seriously with this question of "ultra-modern art."

The term is of course ridiculous, if used absolutely; for the ultra-modern artist of to-day may be the old master of to-morrow. This Mr. Munnings unwittingly admits; but he lacks that modicum of history which would have saved him from self-stultification in his choice of examples. Manet's *Bar,* the picture of which he gives such a singularly uninspiring description, and which he seems to admire excessively, "never could have been styled ultra-modern" he says. But that is just what Manet's pictures were styled, "ultra-modern" or words to that effect, and as such abused and insulted by all the Munningses of Manet's day. Again he is shocked to find Cézanne, whom he seems to admire, classed with the ultras. But Cézanne was ultra-modern: only the classification can have no permanence, since it is merely a term of abuse applied at a particular moment by frightened people to what they cannot understand. For Mr. Munnings Gauguin is ultra-modern and Cézanne is not. In fact, both were ultra-modern, or what common painters and the general public mean by the term—that is, difficult to understand and disquieting. Wherefore thirty years ago Cézanne was abused by men of what Mr. Munnings calls "sound, sane outlook" as violently and stupidly as Manet had been forty years earlier. To prove his wit, Mr. Munnings favours us with what he imagines would be an "ultra-modern" rendering of Manet's famous work: "Picture," says he, "this same scene in the 'ultra-modern' manner. A fattish woman, shall we say, with floating eyes . . ., a strong, black, directional line running halfway round the face, crooked-shaped bottles and square oranges, all slipping down to the bottom right-hand corner." Why, these are almost the identical characteristics attributed to the pictures of Cézanne by the Munningses of 1910.

Mr. Munnings makes play with the well-known fact that Cézanne spoke slightingly of Gauguin, and, he might have added, of Van Gogh and of Corot, and of other good painters either a little older or a little younger than himself. This, Mr. Munnings seems to imagine, proves something; and so it does, but not what Mr. Munnings thinks it proves. It does not prove that Gauguin and Van Gogh and Corot and the rest were bad painters; but that painters' criticism of their contemporaries is untrustworthy. Inevitably so: a sincere and ardent painter is so thoroughly obsessed by his peculiar vision, so deeply convinced of the rightness of his own way of seeing, feeling and expressing, that only by an effort can he avoid regarding a contemporary who feels and sees otherwise as a traitor. The rival's work seems a criticism of his own, and admiration of that work a reflection on his. The tale is too familiar to need retelling: Ingres disapproved of Delacroix; Delacroix—for all that his censure was tempered by exceptional sensibility and knowledge—was disgusted by Courbet; Courbet mocked Corot, and so did Cézanne; and, at the end of his life *le père* Corot is said to have been pained by the early work of the Impressionists. One could multiply instances endlessly. And what do they prove? Not that Delacroix, Courbet, Corot, etc., were bad painters. But that young genius, bursting with a message which it honestly believes to be new, will ever bite the hand from which, knowingly or unknowingly, it fed; and that ripe wisdom seldom hears with pleasure that younger generation knocking inconsiderately, and prematurely, at the door. It proves that a man who believes as passionately in himself as a great artist must will hardly be fair to contemporaries who believe as passionately in something different. Wherefore, though what a genuine artist has to say about his contemporaries is almost always interesting, it is hardly ever just

These last considerations are not meant to apply to Mr. Munnings. His attitude is not so much that of the unjust artist as of the timorous gallery-goer. My belief is that he wants to down modern art (let us drop that absurd prefix "ultra") not because it is a challenge but because it is a terror. No one is going to accuse so generous a man and so successful a practitioner—has he not been called "the László of the equine world"—of mean professional jealousy. He is not jealous: he is frightened. And live contemporary art is and must be frightening to quiet people, since it expresses passionate conviction than which nothing is more dangerous. To most of us great art is terrifying till it has been sterilised by age and usage and some years of confinement in a museum. Only then does that explosive assertion of a temperament, which is what live art must be, become familiar and acceptable to the public. Only when they can overlook that something disquieting which is a characteristic of genuine art can nice people enjoy it whole-heartedly. "Ultra-modern art" is art untamed.

Mr. Munnings glories in his mediocrity. He likes *In the Shadows:* he calls it "a much loved melody" which "is part of life and doesn't need any expounding." "Art," he says, "must be a part of life just like books, the theatre, or horse-racing." Certainly: and doubtless *In the Shadows* is a part of Mr. Munnings's life "just like" horse-racing or his own pictures. But might he not, by an uncommon effort of imagination, conceive it possible that Beethoven's quartets and Picasso's abstractions are parts of other people's lives? And, if so, might not they too be art? No; for, above all things, art "should need no explaining"; that is the burden of his plaint. And it is very certain that no one by sheer unaided gusto ever enjoyed a late Beethoven quartet or an abstract work by Picasso as one enjoys a pint of beer or a steeplechase. Art it seems must be part of Mr. Munnings's life but must not be part of mine. Nothing that requires explanation or an educated taste will do; so bang go the Sonnets. Art is something acceptable to the untrained intellect or eye or ear, something which tickles the vulgar fancy. Art, in fact, is what any fool can understand

CLIVE BELL

THE CLOCK

IN the Nineteen-Twenties
Life was gay,
They made the clock run
Until it ran away.

Ten years later
In a desert place
They met the clock again
With murder in his face.

INTERREGNUM

TWENTY years forgetting,
Twenty years turning the Nelson eye,
Our wings heavy with the pollen
Of flowers about to die

We said "Make merry in the sunshine,
At least we are alive,"
But now the sun has set behind the hangar,
There is no honey in the hive.

LOUIS MACNEICE

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Ballet at Sadler's Wells

The Sadler's Wells Ballet seems to have profited by the varied experience of its exhausting northern tour to achieve a new vigour and finer ensemble. It is delightful after a spell of two pianos, not always played with the peculiar skill which dancing demands, to watch ballet again to orchestral accompaniment, and no doubt the fine *élan* of the Sadler's Wells ballet is partly due to the joy of dancing again with its orchestra, from which Constant Lambert gets an admirable tone and rhythm. Besides the excellence of its ensemble the ballet has several really fine soloists. Margot Fonteyn as Giselle can perhaps not be compared technically with more famous dancers of the part, but she is incomparable in the mad dance, and the quality of her dancing and of her personality is very rare. She is certainly one of the most lovely classical dancers we have ever seen. She has an excellent partner in Robert Helpmann who, from being an able dramatic dancer, has developed into the finest classical dancer in English ballet, and both he, Harold Turner and Alan Carter often alight with far more security of poise after a pirouette or spring than many a male dancer in the Russian ballet. Helpmann's appearance is also now perfect. In the matter of make-up Harold Turner was most unkindly treated in Giselle; his excellent dancing in the *pas de deux* really deserves a better one. One would like space to analyse the choreography of Frederick Ashton's *Harlequin in the Street*, one of those trifles which have more real substance than some efforts of solid pretension. It is in every respect delightful; the scenery and costumes by Derain, the music by Couperin, admirably orchestrated by Gordon Jacob, and the exquisite choreography which so subtly renders the spirit of the music and counterpoints its rhythm. One must see it several times to appreciate its many beauties, but the solos of Alan Carter and June Brae remain particularly in one's mind for their fine quality and excellent performance. The ballet is very well danced throughout.

The British Council in its search for manifestations of English culture might well remember the Sadler's Wells ballet, which includes in its repertory Ninette de Valois's thoroughly English and very moving ballet *The Rake's Progress*, and which has retained the loyalty of so sought after a choreographer as Frederick Ashton.

"Gammer Gurton's Needle," Two of the Chester Plays. At the Torch Theatre

Gammer Gurton's Needle has good claim to be the first English comedy. It is, indeed, almost a parody of what Tudor humour ought to be like, and from the initial loss of the needle to its eventual discovery deeply embedded in a peasant buttock, there is a continual stream of jokes about needles, breeches, whoresons and dung in the earthiest British tradition. The play deserves, and has been given, a lively and spirited production. Miss Helen Lacy as Tib, the maid, picks her nose, scratches her lice, and displays a pair of bloomers so ragged and filthy that they are in the spirit if not the fashion of the sixteenth century, Mr. Reginald Jarman roars and lows pathetically as the unhappy Hodge, and Mr. Harold Reese is excellent in the difficult part of the *diabolus ex machina*. Miss Betty Marsden is, perhaps, insufficiently formidable for the Gammer, and is rather outshone by Miss Maureen O'Moor, her raucous and O'Caseyesque sparring-partner. It is always difficult to know how far the humour of old comedies can profitably be modernised. In the present instance, a good many of the broader Tudor jokes went unperceived or unappreciated by a Knightsbridge audience which enthusiastically approved the unmistakably modern homosexual antics of Dr. Rat, the Curate. Dr. Rat (Mr. Douglas Emery) was extremely amusing, and, as the producer no doubt intended, did much to redress the balance of the old world by bringing in the humour of the new. But he belongs to a different play in another period, and, in spite of his excellence, tended to jar in a production otherwise carefully middle-English.

The Salutation and *The Play of the Shepherds* with their pious and genteel characters shine rather palely after *Gammer Gurton*. Mr. Alan Judd is a statuesque Gabriel, Miss Shirley Wakefield surprises by the felicity of her Mary, and Mr. Harold Reese is not too annoying as a wisecracking shepherd-boy. But the actors were clearly overwhelmed by the reverence of the occasion, and in their efforts to depict simple faith succeeded only in being a little stilted.

"Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," at the Regal "Accord Final," at Studio One

What a delightful fable Frank Capra introduced with *Mr. Deeds*, a fable of Don Quixote in modern dress, of Prince Charming rather, routing the forces of evil by his innate goodness of heart: it is surprising that there were not a thousand imitations. It remained for Mr. Capra to introduce Jefferson Smith in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, a copy even better perhaps than the original. The title implies a similarity in subject and in treatment—the simple country hick again comes to town, again he is pilloried by the press, mocked at by the sophisticated town dwellers, tried,

and almost crucified; his inspiration is even provided by the same girl Jean Arthur. James Stewart plays Jefferson Smith who tilts at corruption in the very Capitol itself. Elected to a seat in the Senate as a stooge for a corrupt State political machine, he arrives in Washington full of enthusiasm and ideals, only to find himself side-tracked. By mistake, he discovers the dishonesty of the leading senator of his state (Claude Rains), and refusing to be involved himself, attempts to expose him in the Senate. He is framed, and almost driven home in disgrace, when Jean Arthur turns up with a book of the Senate rules and tells him that there is nothing to prevent him holding the Senate floor for as long as he can keep talking. In an attempt to prove himself innocent he speaks for almost twenty-four hours consecutively, which drives Claude Rains to attempted suicide and a confession. Frank Capra's production is full of brilliant touches; a duologue with the camera focused on the nervous hands of Mr. Smith; a sequence showing his emotions on reaching Washington, a band playing, the flag flying and the sights of the city revolving on the screen; a scene with a fat business man jammed in a telephone booth. James Stewart has added real histrionic ability to his usual equipment of lanky, ingenuous charm, and it can only be a matter of personal preference which one likes better, Gary Cooper's Mr. Deeds, or James Stewart's Mr. Smith. Jean Arthur, provided with excellent lines by the script, gives the best performance of her accomplished career, as the hard secretary with the soft centre. Claude Rains and Edward Arnold provide a strong team for Big Business. The sentimentality and idealism of the film are not in any way offensive; on the contrary they are genuinely moving. Jefferson Smith, whose spiritual home in Washington is the Lincoln memorial, is the symbol of the swamped, but not drowned, American tradition of democratic independence. And, after all, it is possible to talk with a certain conviction of liberty and democracy in a country which allows the cinema camera into its upper chamber to attack its procedure, to expose the corruption of some of its members, and to aim a few blows at the system itself. It will be an interesting day when our representative institutions receive the same treatment.

Accord Final is a would-be bright French comedy about a famous violinist who bets that he will marry the tenth girl who crosses the threshold of the local Conservatoire. To win the bet he masquerades as a student—and so on. The pace is too hectic even for such accomplished players as Jules Berry, Kate de Nagy and Alerme. The only thing that can be said in favour of the film is that it would have been many times worse if it had been English or American.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, January 6th—
Public Lectures of Historical interest, illustrated by Films and Slides, Geffrye Museum, Kingsland Road, E.2. Every Saturday until March 9th, at 2.30.
Royal Choral Society, "The Messiah," Queen's Hall, 2.30.
The Kutcher Quartet, Morley College, 3. Tickets 1*s.* and 2*s.*

SUNDAY, January 7th—
Rt. Hon. Lord Snell: "The New Year: What Will It Bring?" Conway Hall, 11.

MONDAY, January 8th—
Lunch Hour Recital of Poetry by Lorna Davis, Central Hall, Westminster, 1.15. Collection for British Red Cross Fund.
Course of Public Lectures on: "The War and the Peace," by "Strategicus," Morley College. Each Monday at 6.30.
Dr. K. S. Shelvankar: "The Empire in India," 15 Percy St., W.1. 7.
W. B. Curry: "The Case for Federal Union," Conway Hall, 8.
C. K. Krishna Menon: "India," Dick Sheppard Centre, 8.
"Behind the Schemes," Shaftesbury.

TUESDAY, January 9th—
Jean Thompson: "House Property Management in War-time," Housing Centre, 1.
G. A. Sutherland: "The C.O. 23 Years Ago and To-day," Friends House, 1.20.
Dr. H. Mannheim: "The Historical Development of Punishment," I.S.T.D., 8 Portman Street, 6.30.

WEDNESDAY, January 10th—
Federal Union Lunch Club, Speaker: Mrs. Barbara Wootton, Old Cock Tavern, Fleet Street, 1.
Mrs. Ruth Durant: "The American Scene, Internal Affairs: Political Aspect," Dick Sheppard Centre, 8.
"The Bare Idea," Comedy.

THURSDAY, January 11th—
O. Loewenfeld: "Freedom or Determinism?" Conway Hall, 8.

FRIDAY, January 12th—
Lunch-time Concert, Myra Hess: Pianoforte Recital, Birkbeck College, 1-2. Tickets 1*s.* and 2*s.* 6*d.*

Correspondence

DEMOCRACY IN FRANCE

SIR,—I eagerly awaited your current number hoping to find No. 3 of Mr. Werth's articles on "France and the War," which would have filled in some of the many gaps he has left. Perhaps an unhealthy respect for the censorship has obliged Mr. Werth to fall somewhat short of the high standard he has set in the articles on the French situation which have appeared from time to time in the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION and the *Manchester Guardian*. It is in this spirit that I attempt to supplement rather than criticise Mr. Werth's bird's-eye view of the situation in France to-day.

Mr. Werth devotes a good deal of attention to the position of the Communists in France, and indeed, their attitude and above all activity may prove to be one of the cardinal points not only in the development of the internal situation in France, but in the progress of the war as a whole. It is true that there was a certain amount of confusion in the ranks of the French section of the Third International in the first days of the war. And this confusion was reflected in the speeches and manifestos of the French Communist leaders themselves. But I think that most observers, particularly in Paris, will agree with me that this confusion soon disappeared, and it disappeared precisely with the entry of the Red Army troops into Poland.

This may sound paradoxical. Anyone who has watched the development of the French Popular Front since 1933, however, should hardly be astonished to find those Paris workers who made the streets of the capital resound with the cry, *Les Soviets Partout*, welcome the spread of the Soviets to Eastern Poland and even to Finland. The confusion is rapidly giving way to a grim determination to fight war and to fight Daladier to the bitter end.

Although the vast majority of the men are mobilised either at the front or in the factories, the women of the Communist organisations have shown themselves more than equal to the tasks imposed by an illegal organisation. Naturally a foreigner would not get to know anything of the work of this organisation, except by the merest chance. Yet the Communist Party continues to exist in France, much to the annoyance of the Government. In the place of the one *Humanité* that appeared in Paris before the banning of the paper, a different *Humanité* is appearing in almost every big industrial centre of France, and also at the front.

One has not to go to the secret meetings to find out what this is costing those who produce these pamphlets and broadsheets. Hardly a day passes without the newspapers giving details of another severe sentence passed by the military tribunals on those responsible for the production and distribution of this literature. Sentences of five years' imprisonment accompanied by the loss of political rights for as much as ten years, and fines of 20 to 30,000 francs, are common. It is also interesting to note the large proportion of women and young men or boys of 17 and 18, among the victims. Nor have the judges limited themselves to sentences of imprisonment. Courts-martial have already sentenced a number of Communists to death for activity in the Army.

But perhaps what one most missed in Mr. Werth's survey, and I am sure that many of your readers must share my feelings, was the absence of any mention of the fate of that "democracy" for which we are told we are fighting, and which made France so refreshingly different from England, since the formation of the Popular Front (with all its faults). It may be difficult to face a nasty truth, but I think it must be faced. It is that democracy has disappeared in France, "for the duration." Its place has been taken by an administrative and police dictatorship.

It is for this reason that one finds so disquieting the absence of any mention in Mr. Werth's articles of the expulsion of seventy-four members of the French Parliament and the imprisonment of thirty-five of them; the suppression of four hundred Communist municipalities legally elected; the suppression of eighty-five Trade Unions in the Paris area alone, and the imprisonment of hundreds of their leading officials; the suppression of the Trade Union delegate and shop steward system, the suppression of all legislative and municipal by-elections; the total disappearance of all guarantees of the rights and liberties of the individual.

Perhaps your readers may think I exaggerate. The right-wing weekly *Candide* has given an idea of the police control in Paris. I leave it to you to judge whether they amount to "terror" or not. "The Communist propaganda," writes *Candide*, "has not been suppressed, but measures have been taken to track it down. From

now on special agents will frequent all sorts of establishments and cafés, listening to the conversations, ready to surprise the slightest defeatist proposition. No establishment will be spared, not even the most celebrated in the Rue Royale or the Champs-Elysees." And further on *Candide* goes on to reveal that these measures have been extended to the most luxurious and most exclusive of the *maisons* (*tolerées*).

If there is anything that can rouse the average Frenchman to violent political activity, it is precisely the intensification of the work of the *flick* and the *mouchard*, which he so heartily detests.

Nor does Mr. Werth mention any of the strikes that have taken place since the outbreak of the war or the establishment of concentration camps in France. In the latter are to be found not only French Communists, but Communists, Social-Democrats and anti-fascists from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Italy and Spain, and all in the most indescribable conditions.

If anything was needed to complete the picture of France in this war for democracy, it has been provided by the farce of the session of the French Chamber. Parliamentary rights have been handed over for the duration to the safe-keeping of M. Daladier and his Government by this Rump, for that is all it remains after one-sixth of the deputies have been prevented from taking their seats.

In the face of these attacks is it to be wondered at that the French Communists and with them a considerable section of the French working class, to use Mr. Werth's words, "clamour for peace"? As to an "indication as to what kind of peace," Mr. Werth will find very little hesitation among Paris workers. And as for the Communists, they have accepted the definition of peace outlined by the secretary of the Comintern which has been eagerly read in France since its publication at the end of October. In this document Georgi Dimitrov, after stating that "the imperialists of the warring countries have begun the war for a new partition of the earth," concludes as follows: "The working class is called upon to put an end to the war after its own fashion, in its own interests, in the interests of the whole of labouring mankind, thereby destroying once and for all the fundamental causes giving rise to imperialist wars." Which statement has at least the benefit of directness and unambiguity, however much one may disagree with the principles, and it is this "indication as to what kind of peace" that French Communists have accepted.

In France the war has brought about an upheaval and destruction of all hitherto accepted standards and values which England has not witnessed. The consequences of such an upheaval? . . . only the future can tell. One thing is certain, that persecution has strengthened the Communist position in France, and that even for those who may have left the Party, there exists no other political party which can claim their allegiance and loyalty. And whatever opinions one may have on the action of the U.S.S.R. that in no way excuses the attacks on democracy in France.

Paris, December 16th, 1939. G. L.

[This letter is discussed in our Editorial Comments this week.—ED., *N.S.&N.*]

THE POPE'S APPEAL

SIR,—The Pope's Christmas address was of more importance than might appear from the brief reports in the daily press.

In the first place, in alluding so pointedly to the "co-operation he had received from certain important persons in his task," he clearly implied that this was not a mere *ballon d'essai* or isolated appeal, but that he has been engaged on his task, viz. that of mediation, for some time past, and that this was a step in a diplomatic process. He referred with special satisfaction to the decision of Mr. Roosevelt to send Mr. Myron Taylor to assist the Holy See in "promoting peace"—a decision referred to by Mr. Roosevelt himself, on the same day, as designed to assist "our parallel endeavours for peace." The Pope declared his belief that "responsible and level-headed men" (evidently in the belligerent countries) were "now watching this trend of events," and would be "privately prepared, at an opportune and propitious moment, to define clearly what, *so far as concerned them*, were the fundamental points of a just and lasting peace."

Secondly, the Pope is the first neutral authority to offer, not merely his good office to bring the belligerents into contact, but actual terms of his own.

Thirdly, these terms, though necessarily very general, are evidently thought out with care and diplomatic ability. He answers the question of "acts and guarantees." by laying down, on the one hand, the "right to life and freedom of all nations, both big and small," and the "creation or reconstitution of international institutions," and on the other hand (with the claims of the German and Italian peoples in mind) the "wise and harmonious revisions of treaties," and "attention to the true needs and just demands of nations and peoples." He couples with this the needs and demands of "ethnic minorities." Such a basis could create a "true equilibrium among nations," whereby "many reasons for recourse to violence will be eliminated." An essential part of such a "true peace" is effective disarmament.

Fourthly, while we are accustomed to general "uplift" from religious leaders on the one hand, and "practical" utterances from statesmen on the other, we have in the Pope's address the first notable example of a combination of the two. These terms are not presented as merely counsels of expediency; we are to undertake "a spiritual crusade" for their realisation, with the old cry of the Crusaders, "God wills it!" Why not take his advice?

CHARLES RODEN BUXTON

FINLAND AND THE U.S.S.R.

SIR,—May I add a few details regarding the questions on Finland, published in your correspondence columns on December 30th, numbered (1) to (5) and signed H. H. Benn?

(1) Finland has had and has no "White Guards." During the Civil War in 1918 there was a White Army as there was a Red Army. In addition to its conscript army the Finnish Republic has since developed the rifle corps, common to peasant nations, into a territorial force. Both sections of the Finnish armed forces are by statute non-political, which means in fact that their political complexion is determined by the general political evolution of the nation. In the period dominated by the Lapua Movement, 1929-1932, the armed forces were, as a whole, kept out of the fight. One cannot therefore talk about Finland "under White Guard rule in 1930."

It is not true that "Trade Unions were entirely suppressed." The trade unions that were suppressed were already dissolving because their Communist leaders had transformed them into exclusively political instruments. Between 1929 and 1930 the total membership had gone down from about 90,000 to about 40,000. Important Federations had left the Finnish Confederation of Labour and the need for forging a real instrument of industrial action had been discussed long before the Communist leadership proved its fatuity by calling a general strike for November 16th, 1929, which was a complete and utter failure. The workers simply did not respond.

(2) Far from the 1936 elections being "held only after all Red leaders had been beaten up, disfranchised, placed in concentration camps, or had fled the country," those elections heralded the return of the "Red leaders" to a position in which the working class of Finland could pull its full weight. In consequence of those elections the reactionary President Svinhufvud was replaced by President Kallio and industrial workers and peasants joined hands in government for the first time in the history of Finland. The coalition was confirmed in office in the 1939 elections which reduced the number of Fascist representatives in Parliament from 14 to 8. A notorious "Red leader," E. Vuori, who had seen the inside of Finnish prisons as well as sought refuge in Soviet Russia, became leader of the Finnish trade unions.

(3) Väinö Tanner was always a leader of the "Reds." He was sentenced to imprisonment for his participation on the Red side in the Civil War. His speech for the defence is still the best exposure of the persecutions that took place in the period immediately following the Civil War, and can be bought in any bookshop in Helsinki. He has been elected and re-elected President of the International Co-operative Alliance with the support of the Soviet section. He was recommended to the Finnish nation as President of the Finnish Republic in a manifesto in March, 1937, signed by none other than Mr. Kuusinen, Premier of Moscow's puppet government of Finland.

These facts do not tally with the bundle of nonsense that "he worked for years in association with the reactionary Lappo-Nazi organisation, and in 1930 openly associated himself with the Mannerheim group in a public declaration, which declared: 'We Social Democrats pursue the same aims as the Lappo movement.'" The first part of that statement is simply untrue. The Lappo movement was an indigenous Finnish movement with peasant-clerical leadership. Mannerheim was never associated with it.

(4) The legal basis of the Government attempt on November 22nd, 1938, to ban the Fascist, so-called "Patriotic League" is more complicated than indicated by H. H. Benn. The dissolution

of its "youth" section had been confirmed by the Courts on May 27th, 1938. Government action on the negative attitude of the Courts to the attempted dissolution of the parent body did not mature, owing to more pressing problems which have now taught the Patriotic League to think better of their "Nazi" sympathies. The same problems have also eliminated the last, lingering sympathies of Finnish "Reds" for the Soviet Union.

(5) The suggestion that the Cajander Government in 1937 granted Nazi Germany a concession for a submarine base at Petsamo is in contradiction with every known element of the policy of that Government. It tallies with the principles of propaganda laid down in *Mein Kampf*:

"A definite factor in getting a lie believed is the size of the lie. The broad mass of the people, in the simplicity of their hearts, more easily fall victims to a big lie than to a small one."

53 Albany Street, N.W.1. BJARNE BRAATOY

SIR,—Critic, in the course of a footnote to a letter from Mr. H. H. Benn, wrote in your last week's issue: "THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION published . . . a full exposure of the ill-usage of which the Finnish Communist, Antekainen, was a victim." The Editor of the Finnish journal *Tuleskantaya*, Mr. Erki Wala, reprinted that criticism and was in consequence sentenced to four months' imprisonment—though in fairness to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION it must be added he aggravated his offence by referring to similar comments in the *Socialdemocraten* of Stockholm and in the *Daily Herald* of London.

Like Critic, Mr. Erki Wala was under the impression that 1936 heralded a return to democracy, and subsequent to the change of government that followed these elections, he appealed to the Appeal Court at Abo. His sentence was increased to eight months.

Whatever democratic rights therefore were restored in 1936, the right to quote from THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION was not among them. "BARRISTER"

The Temple.

SIR,—Although I am not a "Bloomsbury Intellectual" or any other particular kind of intellectual or idealogue, I must say that Comrade Archibald Robertson's explanation of Communism is astounding. "Whatever . . . advances the power of the Soviet Union advances Socialism," according to your correspondent. Therefore, the military conquest of Byelo-Russia and the Western Ukraine is a clear gain to Socialism; likewise, too, the military conquest of Finland (if and when it is achieved) would advance Socialism and would be a clear gain to Socialism. Extending this line of reasoning a little further, if Stalin declared war on England, France, Belgium and Holland, bombed the towns, defeated the armies, sank the navies, and otherwise completely conquered all these countries, presumably Socialism would be greatly advanced, since the survivors would all voluntarily become convinced and enthusiastic Socialists actively and joyfully co-operating in the Socialist State that would have been constructed on the foundations of the Russian bombs and shells and cemented with the blood of thousands of British, French, Belgian and Dutch people.

I never imagined Communism was as simple as that, and I must confess that I have never come across any of Marx's or Lenin's writings which lead to such a conclusion.

"Fokia," LEONARD R. WHITTALL

Rickmansworth Lane,
Chalfont St. Peter.

WARTIME FARMING

SIR,—Sour grapes is an ancient story. Mr. L. F. Easterbrook, in his article, "Wartime Farming and After," in December 16th issue, does not make it quite clear whether he is assuming the role of Mr. Fox in his condemnation of the use of imported feeding stuffs. There is, however, a tendency nowadays (one has noticed it in articles in the *Times*) unnecessarily to disparage feeding methods which have been successfully used in recent years. Lord Bledisloe was, I believe, the first authority to hold up Denmark as an example for us to follow, and parties of breeders and students have frequently been organised to go over there to study their system. To-day nothing can be said in favour of it and compound foods and Danish methods are both anathema.

For instance, Mr. Easterbrook says: "The agricultural population place themselves more and more in the hands of chemists and 'ration experts' who send round the made-up rations with the slickness of purveyors of patent medicines." These rations are consumed in "rural factories where imported feeding-stuffs come in at one end and finished meat finally emerges at the other."

Considering that in 1938 we imported bacon to the value of (in round figures) £31,000,000, over half of which came from Denmark, one fails to see where our farmers err in feeding on Danish lines. Mr. Easterbrook does not tell his readers that some of the largest of these "rural factories" have been erected on derelict land which is now, as a result of the pigs having been kept on it, yielding heavy crops of corn.

Again, Mr. Easterbrook says: "the right place for the hen is where . . . thoroughly equipped by Nature for roughing it, she can pick up most of her living from grassland and stubble." Food to produce the eggs imported in 1938 to a value of over £15,000,000, over and above a large home production, would take a lot of picking up, especially in the winter months.

An example of our wasteful methods, according to Mr. Easterbrook, is that of "combing the West Indies" for ground nut and palm kernel. He might have added all our other tropical and sub-tropical dependencies, in all of which oil-seeds constitute such an important part of their exports—indeed, in some cases, the major part. But Mr. Easterbrook knows these oil-seeds are not imported to feed our stock. They come here to be crushed for oil, from which to make margarine, soap, paint, etc., etc., and only the residual "cake" is used in farming. This "cake" is compounded with another by-product, the "offals" (bran and middlings) from flour milling and, sometimes, with yet another, molasses, a by-product in sugar-refining, to become the ready-mixed ration which we are now being told it is not good farming to use.

With a population of over forty millions and only thirty million acres of land available for farming, it is obvious that we must import food in one form or another. It is understandable that in wartime we may have to change our methods but, in so doing, need we assume that these changes will persist when peace returns?

Surbiton, Surrey. W. J. CASEY

THE ECONOMICS OF NEUTRALITY

SIR,—I can add a small footnote to your correspondent's very interesting article in which he discusses Germany's present supply of iron ore and how far the Nazis are dependent on further supplies from Sweden.

I recently had the pleasure of editing a Swedish sailor's remarkable autobiography (written in English) of his twelve years' service in tramp steamers—*Endless Voyage* by Nils Fredricson, published this autumn. For several months he served in a Swedish ore ship exporting iron ore from Narvik to various European ports. In his chapter describing the "ore run" he says:

> The ore that we carried to Rotterdam went in barges through the canals straight to Germany. Twice we went to Emden, and there I was told by a German how they dispose of it all. He was anti-Hitler, and we were talking over things. I asked him how the smelting works could possibly deal with half a million tons of ore a month.
>
> "They don't," he said. "A lot of it is dug down all along the roads as a reserve supply. There it is ready and waiting for an emergency."

From my personal acquaintance with Fredricson I can vouch for the truth of the above conversation, and would add his further remark: "We sailors were mostly pro-English, and we resented the greater part of the ore going to Germany." HUGH BARNES

Sandford Mount Flat,
Charlbury, Oxon.

RICKETTS AND CÉZANNE

SIR,—Probably, by this time, Dr. MacColl is regretting—always supposing him still capable of emotions other than rage—the aspersions he has chosen to cast on my critical intregity. Such charges, for the sake of him who makes them, are best left unanswered; but anyone who cares can find their disproof in the back numbers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION! For the rest, it seems a pity that Dr. MacColl, who has grown honourably grey in the service of art, should now grow purple in disservice. CLIVE BELL

Charleston, Firle, Sussex.

Current Literature

THE RIGHTS OF MAN

H. G. WELLS is one of the few people who see that the war is incidental to a revolution which is actually happening, whether we approve of it or not. If the war goes on long enough, it may, he thinks, wipe out everything else and be the end of *homo sapiens*. But the reasons for it are not just Hitler (whom he calls "a pustule"), but the failure of those in authority everywhere to manage the disruptive forces in our society. In the *New World Order* (Secker and Warburg, 6*s*.), Mr. Wells manages once again to state this familiar argument with freshness and vigour. The disruptive forces are what the Marxians would call the technological advances, the *Yankee Clipper* and world wireless, the improvement in communications and machinery, which compel us to organise on a big scale or perish. Our economic and political institutions are hopelessly antiquated. The Bolsheviks were the first to attempt the necessary adjustment, and for that Mr. Wells gives them credit. The objection to Soviet Collectivism, however, is "that lacking the antiseptic of legally assured personal freedom it will not keep." If civilised man is to survive, he must preserve and extend individual freedom as well as socialise and plan his economy.

Mr. Wells holds that the revolution will not succeed even on the material plane unless the Rights of Man are maintained. If speculation and research are hampered, rulers will not be able to manage and develop the large-scale organisation they institute, nor will they be able to understand and control the technological advances which cannot be avoided. The most important reason for breakdown in Soviet Russia has been that those in control have been so obsessed with the task of preserving their own power that they have stamped out the free life that was essential for the success of their new organisation. Nazi Germany has not yet existed for seven years. The same process is likely to be even more obvious there than in the U.S.S.R. For Communist theory does not repudiate the intellect. On the contrary, it is based on a Western belief in reason. Nazi theory, on the other hand, begins by repudiating reason and the results are practically as well as morally disastrous. For the time, acquired techniques can be applied with ruthless efficiency. But the Nazis have driven out of Germany all their original and speculative brains; another twenty years of Nazi rule would mean a total absence of that fundamental scientific and political thinking without which modern civilisation cannot survive.

* * *

This is the practical and technical case for preserving freedom even in revolution. The moral case is as important as it is commonplace. The power of the State is only justified by its capacity to increase the happiness of common people. Successful wars and revolutions are failures if freedom is lost in the victory. Today we cannot avoid the wars and revolutions. Whether freedom is irrevocably lost in them depends, however, very much on us. Mr. Wells suggests that we should begin with a restatement of the Rights of Man. In the eighteenth century, the Rights of Man were the expression of the demand of the mass of men for personal, economic and religious freedom from the restrictions of clericalism, feudalism or arbitrary despotism. The autocratic State of to-day is armed with vastly greater powers, and we increase those powers when we demand centralised economic reorganisation. The Nazis have competitors; Mr. Wells also warns us against a revival of clericalism and indulges in a characteristic outburst against the obscurantism of the Catholic Church. He urges that the democratic Powers should be induced to make a Declaration which would become "the *common fundamental law* of all communities and collectivities assembled under the World Pax. It should be interwoven with the declared war aims of the combatant Powers now; it should become the primary fact in any settlement; it should be put before the now combatant States for their approval, their embarrassed silence or their rejection." So Mr. Wells proceeds to draft his Declaration. He demands positive action by the State, which must be compelled to provide for the physical and mental needs of the individual, as well as guarantees of his personal freedom. Mr. Wells's statement of these rights shows careful preparation and thought. They are not just thrown out as vague principles, but carefully phrased to meet the needs of a socialist society.

* * *

The world today tends to divide itself into groups which do not speak the same language. There are comfortable people who so value their own freedom that they ignore the Socialist changes which must come about if society is not to disintegrate and quite overlook the freedom of those less comfortably situated. They hang on to property rights which are incompatible with this necessary change. They cannot be induced to see that property, like other individual rights, must be subordinated to the needs of the community; that while men have an instinctive and moral right to possess the fruits of their own labour, as Locke argued in the seventeenth century, they have not any right to demand the possession of other people's property, which is what the modern capitalist, by a curious perversion of Locke, means by the right of private property. The Liberal finds himself willy-nilly in alliance with an out-of-date imperialism, because in a war between the Western Democracies and the Nazis the values of civilisation remain on the democratic side. Others, contemptuous of the muddles of plutocracy, are only interested in the struggle for power, and become the fanatical servants of phrases as potent to destroy and enslave as the inspired doctrines for which men fought and tortured each other for sixteen Christian centuries. The remainder, who wish both for Socialism and for freedom, are caught between the upper and the nether millstones. Mr. Wells takes his stand on the possibility of combining both. The large-scale organisation is inevitable. The task of the intellectual is to insist that during the revolution the rights of man should not be sacrificed. When we come to the difficult question of the way in which individual freedom is to be preserved in war and revolution, Mr. Wells is certainly vague. He urges that now is the time for a "great debate"; when the war ends the politicians will again disappear to settle things in their own bad way in the Darkness of the Council Chamber. But he admits that we shall not get any good solution out of the warring sects which now yell their dogmas at our indifferent world. He does not tell us how we are to preserve the Rights of Man intact if the warring sects drown the great debate with their yelling. Are they to be suppressed? The orthodox Marxian he thinks as unfit as the destructive Fascist to create a new world. For Marxians are mistaken in thinking that there is an uncorrupted proletariat ready to take over the control from the effete bourgeoisie; capitalist society corrupts the proletariat as well as the capitalist. Marx correctly prophesied the breakdown of capitalism; he saw that the point would come when the bourgeoisie would be ruined and the State forced to take over the functions of the capitalist. He wrongly assumed that a ruined middle-class would become proletarian in mind. The candid Marxian, looking at the world to-day, may learn both from Russia and from Germany. He should admit that even in a country as little troubled with a middle-class as Russia it was illusory to think that a stable and happy society (whether called Socialist or not) could be built on the liquidation of every one who did not welcome the dictatorship of the proletariat; in passing he might notice that in this middle-class country the bourgeoisie are likely to do the liquidating if it comes to a test. Seeing all this, Mr. Wells urges that in the West we may still learn these lessons and accomplish a revolution without losing sight in the process of the purpose for which revolutions are made.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

BATTLEPIECE

Men of Good Will: Verdun. Vols. XV. and XVI. By JULES ROMAINS. Trans. G. HOPKINS. *Peter Davies.* 10s. 6d.

Like a reliable omnibus, the *Men of Good Will* rumbles efficiently along its appointed route through the pre-war years; and takes up and puts down, in addition to the nameless human swarm, its regular passengers. After an absence from the route, it is pleasant to recognise familiar faces. How they have changed or, more subtly, how they have not changed! How the sight of them brings everything back. And then—how typical of this friendly but peculiarly non-intimate novel, how typical of life on the bus routes!—off the man jumps and one is left with the flat feeling which follows the pick-up that has failed. The Age not man is the hero of *Men of Good Will*, as Time is the hero of *War and Peace*.

The two latest volumes from M. Romains call for the comparison because they are battle pieces of pretty well the highest rank. The society which stood on the edge of the European War of 1914 in the earlier book has gone over in the present one and has got the war it longed for. Not quite, of course; one is always wishing for the previous war—*vide* broadcasts of *Chu Chin Chow*—and France got battles like Verdun instead. Between Tolstoy and Romains there is, of course, the difference between genius and talent; but I do not think that the actual battle pictures and the handling of the strategy in Romains are excelled by the master, except in Tolstoy's marvellous capacity for rendering the clear, sea-like mingling, murmur and flow of continuous incident. Genius appears easily to sustain its note; talent has to get its breath. But Romains is not inferior in his understanding and interpretation of the *virtu* of war—allowing for the difference in the kinds of war the two novelists describe. There is a difference in scale. The Frenchman is at his *dossier;* his book is the war illustrated rather than the war imagined; one almost sees him trundling by in his Citroen. But he has that grasp of groups, that power to describe large movements and keep them moving which Tolstoy had. It is only on examining the groups that one sees how all the men in Tolstoy's are living individuals, whereast in M. Romains's only a few characters are individualised.

This power to manage groups of people and to decide which are important and in what order was totally lacking in the war novels of the twenties. In them we had the emotional and physical revulsion of the common man who had recovered his personality and was protesting against the anonymity which had been forced upon him by the mass character of the war. The direction of the war was ignored by these writers. It was just chaos. The personal horror transcended everything. T. E. Lawrence and Ford Madox Ford brought intelligence to bear on the war, it is true; they, too, saw the war from on top and not from below; but neither of these writers, the first fighting an old-fashioned romantic war, the second dilettante by nature, had M. Romains's grasp of what the human and technical components of mass war are. He sits down to them like a skilled architect to his plans and estimates. The other writers had little feeling for military virtue; they found modern war too preposterous to be interesting, a chaos of new and old theories, where men went into the futuristic barrage wearing medieval helmets on their heads, and speed produced a mortal traffic block. If the war had moved they might have felt differently—as the aviators indeed did—it might have been heroic to be caught on the wing but it was a degradation to be put through a stationary concrete-mixer like so much gravel.

Writing at a greater remove, M. Romains has the advantage. The war was a social and military revolution and the intellect can detect something of its nature. *Verdun* opens with the new military problems seen as they come against men, their temperaments and careers. The individuals are with two minor exceptions all officers, men obliged to suffer the war, but with some small say in their own destiny. The feeling for the common man has not gone, but (not altogether ironically) it is broadened to include his leaders. The physical horrors are not neglected, but one has them rubbed into the mind rather than the nose; the coarser humours have gone—they are implied in a certain *malaise* in the relations of officers and men—but M. Romains does not forget the pleasure of seeing a Brass Hat caught out while paying a call to a "safe" part of the front line or of noting that polite "After you, please" atmosphere which infects visiting civilians when the shells begin to burst contrary to routine. While we are on this, the main distinction which M. Romains makes between his

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soldiers and civilians is that it is left to the latter to have the unacclimatised characteristic of courage. A soldier is a man who is afraid.

Another important point (which becomes clear as one lives in the dug-outs with men like Clanricarde and Jerphanion) is that the citizen soldier is not the common man as this was understood in political rhetoric after the war. Isolated from society, the soldier began to hate and distrust it. His feeling was anarchic. To domesticate his fears on his first night in the line after a spell of leave, Jerphanion creates a typical fantasy. He imagines the war going on for many years and the gradual desertion of the armies. They sneak away from the front in groups and settle in caves, eventually take possession of villages and, comradely among themselves, they are deliberate outlaws, hostile to the civilian population, from whom they extort what they want. Jerphanion, coming home on leave, and to a very happy home, reflects: "Was this all I was fighting for? Is it worth it?" The war did not bring the solidarity of comradeship to society. It made what is called civilisation—though what writers really mean is present-day society—a fake and a bore. So Jerphanion writes to his friend Jallez in 1916:

> We know now that men can be made to do exactly anything—after 100 years of democracy and eighteen centuries of the Christian faith. It is all a question of finding the right means. If only we take enough trouble and go sufficiently slowly, we can make him kill his aged parents and eat them in a stew. I foresee appalling developments. We may live to witness the revival of human sacrifice. We may see thinkers sent to the stake for having preached heresy. We may see witch trials and persecutions of the Jews as bad as any that took place in the Middle Ages. We may see crowds yelling themselves into an hysteria of adoration as the despot passes, and the sons of those who now vote Socialist rolling on the ground and crying, "Crush us, O living God." . . . We have crossed the Rubicon. . . . We are leaving a world where all these things are natural and simple, and, I repeat, only too much a matter of practical politics.

It is dangerous to identify M. Romains with Jerphanion, but I think it is fair to think of M. Romains's point of view as a working lay piety which sees the disaster but not the revolution which the war was. He sees society breaking down, but he pays for the remarkable comprehensive tolerance of the practical moralist with a lack of that deeper poetic sensibility to the organic struggles in society and man. Like a charitable institution, he is humanitarian, concerned with tragedy but not in the highest imaginative sense tragic.

But it would be wrong to convey that *Verdun* is a speculative novel. It is a history, a book of action and prolonged suspense, a book almost entirely about men. With what skill he drops the first hints of the coming German attack. From the routine of the trenches he conducts one on a masterly tour of the system. Here are the staffs with their rival theories, their little courts, their personal intrigues and their strategic inspirations and obsessions. One sees Verdun first as a forgotten salient, with its dismantled forts, in the full decay of military romanticism and complacency. Even when the great German barrage goes down at last Headquarters refuses to believe its ears. M. Romains plays round the edges of his drama with the greatest brilliance and, all the time, handing one an enormous dossier of military information which is never congested, always assimilated into living and human terms. Hearing the word Verdun, after reading this book, I shall always see General Doroure—that solid, admirable portrait of the soldier whose intuitions are sounder than his arguments and who is thereby suited, though he does not know it, to the special occasion rather than the great command of his ambitions—I shall always see General Doroure going for the morning ride which vanity dictates, and suddenly pulling in his horse as he hears the first boom from the north-east and understanding at once what it means. M. Romains always sees the dualism in human beings. The boom means Verdun; but it also means for General Doroure that he was right—right, since he valued his career, to turn down a command so unpromising, so made for scapegoats. General Doroure is a very great character. It is another example of M. Romains's thorough possession of his subject that he avoids the obvious and makes General Doroure fall and not rise after this private victory. Rejuvenated and advanced as he has been by the war, General Doroure gets not only a delightful false youth but a mild megalomania, a touch of persecution. The last one sees of him is in a comic scene in which he travels all night to Chantilly to tell Joffre that a Zeppelin has bombed his (Doroure's) headquarters, destroying his bedroom and office, and to ask what France is going to do about it!

It is the advantage of M. Romains's method of distributing his characters fragmentarily over a series of episodes and novels, that they never take final shape. There is always room for second thoughts, for a further roundness. To a writer with M. Romains's gift of verisimilitude and tolerance, the discovery of this method has been most fortunate. It fulfils him. It is interesting that none of the important characters is killed or maimed. The battle is the chief character and what is tragic in the battle is that men have the will to go on living in it. Again the theme: there is nothing men will not accept, there is nothing they cannot be made to do—a philosophy, of course, equally gratifying to optimism.

In a novel so various and so appropriate in its choice of what shall be vivid and what seen from one remove, the great scenes have a tremendous weight. The account of the barrage with the three officers caught in a strange dug-out and wondering whether any living thing can have survived; the eerie awakening of the survivors when the barrage stops, that description of the German infantry dawdling through the scrub looking like men on an evening walk looking idly for mushrooms, the marvellous flow of the fighting narrative from the particular to the general—these are passages of superb accomplishment. M. Romains is above the scene, inexhaustible and composed. One follows the shadow-fighting in the woods, sees the signal rockets catch by mistake in the trees, hears the despair of the soldiers cursing the silence of their guns, ignorant that H.Q. simply doesn't believe in the attack; one sees the instinctive rush out of the dug-outs, the laconic ceremony of taking prisoners. And later, after these close-up shots, one goes on to a more majestic survey, marching with the exhausted reserves, platoon colliding with platoon like goods trucks on the single switchback road that links France with the vital town now going up in flames like a fantastic display of fireworks. The whole is terrible because it is comprehensible, because its horror is accepted as part of the scheme of things. War *is* acceptable long after *la gloire* and the slogans have gone: see the officer giving a man a lift in his car and stopping to watch a naval gun fire and to discuss its merits and limitations. The great general gifts of the French to literature are will, order and curiosity; and by M. Romains they are once more applied in a way which makes one doubt if there is any living novelist with a comparable constructive power.

V. S. PRITCHETT

WAR AIMS

For What Do We Fight? By SIR NORMAN ANGELL. *Hamish Hamilton.* 6*s.*

Our War Aims. By WICKHAM STEED. *Secker and Warburg.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

Discussions of War Aims in this country are more apt to reflect the moral desires of the writer than to represent any hard thinking about political possibilities. This is not unnatural at a time when political analysis is almost impossibly complex. One must begin with some assumptions. The first common assumption is a victory for Britain and France producing a situation not so very different from that of 1918. I believe myself that this is improbable; on this occasion revolutionary upheavals are likely to be beyond the control of the Allied governments, if, indeed, they themselves survive. But, given this assumption, I find that very few writers really face the problem of Germany's future. The French claim to be realistic, but their plans are usually hopelessly out of date. To restore the Hapsburgs would be to go back not to the Treaty of Versailles but to the Treaty of Vienna. The ghost of Metternich will scarcely make a world order. Nor is it enough, as Federal Unionists seem to think, to talk of building a federation of the West, leaving Russia and Germany out of the picture. Those who talk about a Federated Europe must face the difficulty of trying to rebuild countries like Czechoslovakia and Poland with populations a quarter or less of a great neighbour, which, whatever its other qualities, certainly shows immense capacities for recuperation and conquest.

Both Sir Norman Angell and Mr. Wickham Steed try to face this problem. Sir Norman Angell is anxious mainly to restate his familiar thesis in terms that fit the present situation. He wants us to realise that defence comes first in the minds of nations and that the true method of defence is collective unity, not national sovereignty and national armaments. His new book should be useful to people suddenly brought up against these problems by the arrival of war. They will discover that if we are ever to have a sane and peaceful world, it will be at the cost of some sacrifice

to ourselves as well as to other people. We shall have to go much farther in accepting third party judgment, in internationalising colonies, and in preparing an international force. All this and much else about the ideology with which Britain should now fight is put with Sir Norman Angell's usual lucidity. But I doubt to-day whether this philosophy still has the necessary dynamism for success. Sir Norman Angell has always been too much like a Frenchman of the Age of Reason who believed that he could convert those in authority by showing them that private benefit and public advantage were coincident. The appeal to long-sighted selfishness is an appeal which often comes off in peaceful conditions, but it is not in itself sufficient when the issues concern the life and death of nations and social systems.

Mr. Wickham Steed tackles the problem of Central Europe with supreme assurance. He knows Germany and German literature as few Englishmen do; all his life he has struggled to convince his fellow-countrymen that Germany is not as other countries, but a nation impregnated with a theory of their own divine calling to rule over other people who are born to be slaves. Mr. Steed's view should not be dismissed merely as prejudice. In his chapter on the origins of Hitlerism he traces the basic doctrines of the Nazis back through Houston Chamberlain and Gobineau to Hegel and Fichte, and a very disturbing chapter it is. He admits the existence of another Germany, best represented to-day, in his view, by Thomas Mann. But there is in Mr. Steed's mind a conviction that the Germans are "different"; they suffer, if not from an over-dose of original sin, at least from an upbringing so bad that for practical purposes the difference between innate wickedness and hardened recidivism is unimportant. A whole host of questions arises, biological, historical and psychological. I think, in reading Mr. Steed, one should remember that in many parts of the world the British ruling class has in the past looked to those it has conquered much the same as the Germans now look to their neighbours; one should also recall that for several centuries it was the French who showed this incapacity to stay still and whose *Drang nach Osten* was the menace to peace. Tsarist Russia had also its *Drang nach Osten*, and the tendency to expand has not disappeared with the coming of Socialism. But when we have made allowance for all this, it does remain true that German political thinking has been impregnated with a humourless arrogance reached in no other country. It is true that we in England have sung "When Britain first at Heav'n's command arose from out the azure main," and justified a passionate belief in the British Navy on this doctrine of a Providential call. But the element of democracy in Britain and in France has for centuries been strong enough to preserve a certain balance, and British imperialism has always allowed room in the world for other forms of culture and control. Hitler, on the other hand, is merely an extreme example (with certain special modifications due to the peculiarities of the period after Versailles) of an attitude of mind which has led to war after war and which resolutely refuses to allow European *lebensraum* for anyone else but Germans. Mr. Steed tackles this problem by demanding that we should stand firmly for our conception of freedom and oppose it to the German conception of the State Absolute.

Mr. Steed's chapter on freedom in peace is thoughtful if perhaps a little involved. He tries to avoid the usual clichés about freedom and decides that:

> The root of the matter is a strong sense of the difference between what is absolute and what is relative, coupled with a determination to reject the absolute and to cling to the relative with all its changefulness. Sooner or later, thought upon this difference leads to the conclusion that human freedom is a ceaseless experiment in relativity, a constant process of adjusting ourselves to circumstances. The freedom we wish to enjoy and are now defending is liberty to think, to speak and to act under the laws, conventions or customs of human society.

When he comes to the peace settlement Mr. Steed stands firmly on old ground. He begins with the uncompromising statement that it is not enough to overthrow Hitlerism in the sense of overthrowing Hitler or the Nazis; we have to deal drastically and permanently with the problem of Germany. "The watchword must be: 'Back to the German frontiers of 1919!'" The right of independent decision must be restored to Austria, Czechoslovakia must have her pre-Munich borders and Poland be restored with Danzig. Feeling perhaps that there is nothing very hopeful or inspiring about reviving the policy of Clemenceau and Poincaré in 1940, Mr. Steed goes on to argue that this time we must at once, during the war, lay the foundations of a federation between all the peoples allied or associated with the present enemies of Hitlerism; later a democratic Germany should be allowed into the federation

> either as a political unit or as a sub-confederation of German States, when it has been ascertained that they have disarmed to the level requisite for the maintenance of internal order, and have set up institutions guaranteeing personal freedom.

Neutral States, which accept the same terms, should be asked to enter; colonial possessions should be placed under a federal trusteeship and a new League of Nations, with real teeth in it, should be built up to maintain the new order. So Mr. Steed ends, in some form, a Federal Unionist. He writes:

> The only way to prevent frontiers from being causes of discord is to render war so unlikely that frontiers no longer need to be fortified and guarded in arms.

He is still, it seems to me, thinking too much in terms of politics and too little in those of economics. I see no reason to hope that with our present type of economic system and our present type of ruling class, Britain and France at the end of another successful war would make a better shot at peace than they did in 1919. If they were more ruthless it might be longer before a renascent Germany repeated the Hitler story—and Mr. Steed is very definite that Germany will always try to dominate the moment she is allowed to be strong. I think he would reach a more hopeful conclusion if, instead of being content with saying that frontiers will only remain if war is made impossible because the centralised force is overwhelming, he said that the only hope lay in common economic institutions which would render intercourse between Poles, Germans and Czechs so necessary and easy a matter that the frontiers would gradually be forgotten. That requires, I think, an immense economic revolution as well as a centralised police force.

TOM PAINE

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In the autobiographical world this winter has been a shy season. There are as usual plenty of books, but nearly all the writers have kept their private lives to themselves. One of them is even too shy to write about his work, and fills a large volume with—on looking back, I scarcely know what.

Mr. Rowland Kenney is not merely the pick of this bunch, he is *hors concours*. I am ashamed to confess I had never heard of him. But he has already published two books, he used to edit the *Daily Herald*, and (drifting into Civil Service) he was officially employed in Norway and Poland during and after the war. Into the bargain, he is "self-made," and started life in a wonderful variety of odd jobs. All that would not by itself explain his superiority. But in the first place he can write, which I begin to think is of some importance to a writer, even of memoirs. And then, he has a special and most rare charm. Few people are genuinely open-minded; few indeed are at once combative, tenacious and open-minded. In Mr. Kenney all these traits exist and thrive. Though a born embracer of causes and a staunch partisan, he has never judged either persons or ideas *a priori*. Or not for long; even when he tried to maintain a prejudice, candour was always breaking in. He appreciates whatever has any value, of any kind.

Therefore he has almost too much to say, and one could do with less about the I.L.P., guild socialism, and Social Credit. These may be interesting subjects, but they have swallowed the narrative. And it began so well: the account of his childhood and rather vagabond youth in the north of England is so revealing and likeable. Mr. Kenney does not shroud himself on purpose, but he does not give himself enough space. He should have run to another volume.

Sir Thomas Montgomery-Cuninghame has left himself out, as near as possible, altogether. His main subject is the last war. He knows a great deal about it; and he insists that it was not provoked by "German aggression." Europe, he says, might have remained at peace if Austria had kept quiet. But Austria was in mortal

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fear of disruption and the "Slav menace," and obsessed with the advantage of striking first. "The Chief of Staff . . . was a persistent advocate of war—war it might be said against anybody, in any direction, at any time. . . . In 1908, 1909, 1911, 1912, 1913 and 1914 . . . he had pleaded for unprovoked attack upon Serbia. . . . He had a motto, 'Iron fuses best when it is hot,' which he applied to the loose organisation of the Habsburg dominions." But, of course, it did not work out like that. "The moralist can observe with satisfaction—or the reverse, as the case may be—that those who had most to lose by war did most to provoke it and suffered accordingly."

Sir Thomas was military attaché in Vienna from 1912 to 1914. Therefore he had an opportunity to judge. And he liked the Austrians; he believed the Habsburg Empire was a good thing. "I could never understand how any British journalist could sympathise with separatism, the advantages of federation, from the practical point of view, being so obvious." The war did nothing to change his mind, and from the first he looked on the creation of Czechoslovakia as a shocking blunder. "It seemed to me contrary to the lessons of history, geography, economics, morality and common sense. Masaryk got it across somehow, but it did not last long, as we know, nor was it likely to do so." Moreover, he thought the Czechs were suffering from swelled head, and doing their very best to get themselves hated.

These are not popular views; they are the more refreshing at a time when one is sick of popular views. As attaché in Greece—where he describes the British policy as "a welter of inconsistent tormenting"—and later on the Western Front, Sir Thomas remained equally faithful to his own judgment. He inspires a good deal of confidence, though he is not easy to read.

Facts and Features of My Life might be used in support of his ideas on "war guilt." I don't mean that Sir George Franckenstein either thought or thinks his country to blame. No: but he says exactly what, from Sir Thomas's account of things, you would expect him to say. Austria had to make a stand; it was an Austrian war—in his opinion, just and inevitable. Well, it scarcely matters now, but one can still admire Sir George's unaggressive yet fearless handling of sore points. He was in Brussels during the war; he writes of the German occupation with pride, and pretends no horror at the shooting of Edith Cavell. From the aesthetic point of view his book is rather thin and empty but it has charm.

It is a far cry from politics to medicine. But Dr. Tothill practised in Trinidad, so he has both disease and colour to write of, and his first chapter is perfection. But alas, he doesn't keep up. He *will* describe his good pals, and harp on his devotion to rum. But whenever he returns to the note, he is splendid value.

The next two may be strictly autobiographical, or may not. They are both by women, and in both the name on the cover is different from the name in the book. Each has a doubtful element of story and a "love interest." But it is clear that the professional side at least has been drawn from life.

The writer of *No Job for a Woman* is a bacteriologist, brilliant at her work and apparently brimming with sex appeal, but unwooed, alas, by the man for whom she longs to retire into domesticity. So there is nothing for it but to "make good." Her adventures among men and beasts in California are highly coloured and very readable. And she has the strength of mind to abstain from a happy ending.

Silver Woods is the book that *ought* to have been called "No Job for a Woman." Three sisters are trying to run a seventy-acre farm. They can't afford labour; even without it, they are always on the rocks. Their life is one of endless drudgery and bleak solitude, and it will never improve. Really there should be no events in this book. There is a plot, however, thin but consecutive—a dreary little plot. In the place of style—it has absolutely no style, almost agreeably so—there are poetic and sentimental clichés. And yet it comes off, in spite of everything. It is so very bleak and sincere.

K. JOHN

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PHYSICAL FUN

Mr. Tompkins in Wonderland, or Stories of C, G, and H. By G. GAMOW. Illustrated by John Hookham. *Cambridge.* 7s. 6d.

The case of Newton *versus* Einstein is not by any means as celebrated as it should be because you and I, the Mr. Tompkinses of the jury, perform our functions in a middling world which is equally removed from the stellar and atomic magnitudes in which Einstein begins to make Newton look silly. Mr. Tompkins knows about 10, but he is blissfully vague about 10^{10} and 10^{10}, and comfortably certain that if he could understand what these are life would be no easier for him. The velocity of light being as large as it is, and Planck's quantum of action and the mass density of the universe being as small as they are, Mr. Tompkins fails to see what all the fuss is about. He is ready to swear that if his train, going at 20 miles an hour, meets another train going at 30 miles an hour, the trains are separating at 50 miles an hour. When he pots the red at billiards he will tell you that the white moves in a straight line and is a billiard ball all the way to the red. If you say that you alter a stone by looking at it he will contradict you. How nearly right Tompkins is—and what a lot of fun he is missing!

Mr. Gamow, beautifully abetted by Mr. Hookham, has had a very good idea about getting Mr. Tompkins interested in the hair-raising fun of modern physical theory. Mr. Tompkins attended a course of lectures on this subject, with the usual result. The after-effects were, however, far from usual. Mr. Tompkins dreamed. He dreamed once, and behold, the earth was no larger than his back garden, the universe expanded from 20 to 100 miles in diameter in two hours, it was very hot and very cold and very pink and very blue, the Professor's note-book shot out into space and could be watched all the way round the universe. He dreamed again, and the velocity of light was only 10 miles an hour, which gave Mr. Tompkins some splendid adventures on a bicycle, with sidelights on the longevity of commercial travellers. He dreamed again, and the quantum of action being now a reasonable quantity, billiard balls were really rather gruelly and really did escape from cages. He dreamed again—and had a terrific ride on an elephant through the quantum jungle, where a tiger attacked him on all sides at once and was only downed by the Professor's knowledge of probabilities. He dreamed himself altogether into six worlds in which Einstein is important to the functioning of Tompkins, and he lived happily ever after with the Professor's daughter. At the end of this, Mr. Gamow prints the lectures which Mr. Tompkins did not understand. He dedicates his frolic to Lewis Carroll and Niels Bohr. Neither should object, and Mr. Tompkins should be properly grateful.

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As you may have noticed in "The Times," the Simpson Desert Expedition was successful in its attempt, during May, June, July of this year, to cross the little-known Simpson Desert, an area of some 56,000 sq. miles in Central Australia. The desert crossing took longer than we expected and towards the end we had only cigarette-making tobacco left.

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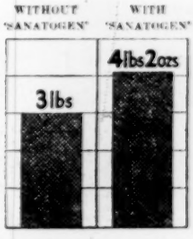

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ANOTHER TRANSLATION OF CHIN P'ING MEI

Chin P'ing Mei: The Adventurous History of Hsi-mên and His Six Wives. With an introduction by ARTHUR WALEY. *John Lane.* 25s. net.

Foreign visitors to the old book and curio shops of the *Liu Li Ch'ang* in Peking are still offered brocaded albums of "spring paintings" or naughty pictures which, compared with the ferocious fantasies of the Japanese on similar themes, are like the gambollings of amorous Brer Rabbits. The best and liveliest, reminiscent of fine Rajput miniatures, illustrate scenes in *Chin P'ing Mei*, of which two English translations have recently appeared. Readers with insufficient leisure for Colonel Egerton's four volumes of *The Golden Lotus* (Routledge, 4gns.) may turn with profit to Mr. Bernard Miall's one-volume translation from the abridged version of Herr Franz Kuhn, which contains a valuable historical introduction by Mr. Arthur Waley.

The great colloquial novels of China, like those of European countries, can be counted on ten fingers, and *Chin P'ing Mei*, as a realistic record of domestic life in sixteenth-century China, is one of the most important of these "unacknowledged classics." Sixteenth-century China was only yesterday, more yesterday than Victorian England. Writing in the colloquial language of his contemporaries, the novelist was less concerned with the minute beauties of literary style than with vivid description and characterisation. Often a style both rich and varied was achieved unconsciously, as in *Chin P'ing Mei*. Sometimes the incidents are told directly, sometimes by subtle implication; now we are in the blazing sunlight, now in the chequered shade. We find preciosity cheek by jowl with the crudest candour; refinements that would melt M. Valéry alternate with the naïvety of the popular story-teller, such as the recurrent coda: "Gentle reader, if you wish to learn what happened next, listen to the sumptuous details in the following chapter." And since poetry has always had a higher place in Chinese life than in the West, the narrative is interspersed with appropriate poems.

No less a scholar than Cordier has said of *Chin P'ing Mei*, "the translation of such a book would render superfluous any other book upon the manners of the Chinese." In my opinion, *Hung Lou Mêng* or "The Dream of the Red Chamber" is an incomparably finer work of art, but *Chin P'ing Mei* preceded it by two hundred years, and is, therefore, the first great Chinese novel of domestic life. Giles remarked that the translator would need "the nerve of a Burton." Mr. Miall's version omits the scabrous passages and still manages to retain much of the original flavour. When we consider the length of the book, the multiplicity of its characters and episodes, it is a conspicuous achievement.

The title, a synthesis of the names of three feminine protagonists, could be translated: A Golden (*Chin*) Vase (*P'ing*) of Plum-blossom (*Mei*). Golden Lotus (*P'an Chin-lien*) dominates the whole story, even when she is not there: a Chinese *Nana*, viciously feline, jealous, passionate, revengeful, definitely criminal and completely irresistible. *Le Bonheur dans le Crime* is the motif of her relationship with Hsi-mên Ch'ing. They are bound together the more closely by the blood of her murdered husband, as by the strongest of love-philtres. This episode the author borrowed from Chapters 23 and 24 of an earlier novel, *Shui Hu Chuan* (translated by Pearl S. Buck as "All Men are Brothers"), and it is familiar to millions of playgoers through the perennially popular melodrama *Shih-tzŭ Lou* ("The Lion Tavern"). But the superior genius of the author of *Chin P'ing Mei* becomes immediately apparent if we compare his characters with their prototypes, and the minor characters, such as Mother Wang the old procuress, are drawn with an equal mastery of psychology. It is mainly by virtue of their dialogue—he catches each revealing intonation—that they come to life. The descriptions are more or less conventional ("A face of peach-blossom loveliness; two brows as finely curved as the sickle of the new moon"), but a torrent of life rushes through the conversations, tirades and harangues. We see Golden Lotus most vividly when she launches into a flood of passionate speech. The idiom is extremely difficult to render in another language ("But, of course, if you cleave to the New One as fast as glue and lacquer, then is there naturally no time left for this poor devoted slave"), and we needs must sigh, at intervals, for Mr. Waley, who has spoiled us for other translations from the Chinese, but Mr. Miall's version is spirited and ingenious, and the essence of the original is preserved with remarkable sleight of hand.

HAROLD ACTON

Can America Stay Neutral? By ALLEN W. DULLES and HAMILTON FISH ARMSTRONG. *Hamish Hamilton.* 7s. 6d.

Now that Europe is again at war, two American experts, Mr. Allen W. Dulles and Mr. Hamilton Fish Armstrong, assess America's chances of preserving her neutrality in the struggle in a book which is soberly objective throughout. It describes in turn earlier American efforts to safeguard neutrality, the brief period of co-operation in collective security under Wilson, the swing back to isolation, and the neutrality acts that were its expression.

With the adoption of the "Cash-and-carry" Act, the United States has dropped its efforts to remain neutral by specific legislation to that end. The result will be a boom in America, and the authors frankly face the probable consequences of this. They realise that what happened in 1915, when the United States Government changed its policy of loans to belligerents because the Allies' unfavourable trade balance promised, in the words of the then Secretary of State, "industrial depression, idle capital, idle labour, numerous failures, financial demoralisation, general unrest and suffering among the labour classes," may well happen in the future. If it does, and loans are raised for the Allies to assure the continuance of prosperity, then America will be more than half committed. But fundamental to the whole question, in the authors' view, is the public conscience of the United States. Mr. Roosevelt himself does not pretend to be "neutral in thought"; and the authors' conclusion is: "The country should be slow to anger and should judge the acts of foreign governments in the light of our own national interests. This does not mean that Americans count the preservation of liberty here and the survival of human liberties in other countries as of only trifling importance in a world largely given over to *Machtpolitik*. It would be a stupid foreign ruler indeed who thought so."

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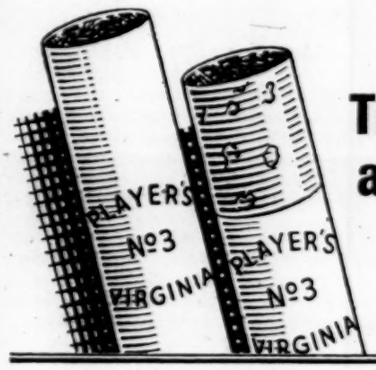

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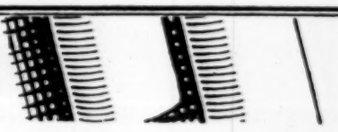

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ALEXANDER NEVSKY
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DANCE

A BRIGHTER NIGHT FOR LONDON LABOUR, London Labour Party's Silver Jubilee Reunion. PORCHESTER HALL, Paddington, W. (near Royal Oak Underground station), SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 1940, at 7 p.m. Tickets: single 2s., double 3s. 6d., from London Labour Party, 258-262 Westminster Bridge Road, S.E.1, from affiliated societies, or at the Doors. THE MOON WILL BE UP!

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GREEK RESTAURANT. The White Tower. 1 Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road. Museum 2187. For Greek and Near Eastern food and wines at their best. Shashliks, Stuffed Vine-leaves, Raki, Retsina wine, etc. Business as usual. Open on Sundays.

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THEN there is always KINGSTON.
Enquiries to The Secretary, Kingston, Edinburgh, 9.

description of outlandish lands and peoples, we are shown how the economic activities of the colonies are subject to the whims of the great British market—and reminded of our direct responsibility for the consequences. The substance of the book gives the story, with effective and sometimes amusing illustrations, of sugar, bananas, tea, coffee, cocoa, rubber, palm-oil, an instructive account of the production of hides and skins, and of forestry, perhaps rather too little on tin and copper mining. It shows in particular how British tariff changes have had devastating and quite uncontrollable effects on one-crop colonies, for instance those of the sugar group, and how a mere change of fashion like the passing of mahogany furniture left British Honduras in the lurch. On the other hand, new demand has at times given a useful if uncertain fillip. The trade in palm oil and latterly that in rubber are obvious examples. Mr. Woodruff is clearly right that London's role as the headquarters of international trade has hindered, or still hinders, the growth of a sense of its political responsibility as the centre of an Empire, and that the prior concern with commerce is in great measure responsible for the continued neglect of purposeful development in the colonies.

So far as it trenches on more general ground, the book follows the well-known *Times* technique. While admitting that all is not as it ought to be, it makes the most of positive achievements even where they are small. A new edition would do better to make room for more frank discussion like that given to the Gold Coast cocoa dispute. But the book brings out the vital point—overlooked by a great many critics—that the colonies have suffered from under-development rather than "exploitation." Singapore and Hong Kong, for example, and a great many towns and plantations, not to say mining areas, in Africa and elsewhere, really deserve for their "exploiters" the blessing promised to those who make two blades of grass grow where before there was only one—or nothing but fever swamp or jungle.

BOOKS TO COME

Duckworth announces for January 18th a new book on *Oscar Wilde* by Lord Alfred Douglas. There are some prefatory remarks by Bernard Shaw. This firm is reprinting in the Rainbow edition the five novels of Ronald Firbank which have been out of print for many years—*Cardinal Pirelli*, *Flower Beneath the Foot*, *Valmouth*, *Prancing Nigger* and *Vainglory*.

Nelson books for January 11th include *The Village Theatre* by Mary Kelly, an historical analysis of folk drama and a new and revised edition, containing additional material, of George Slocombe's *History of Poland*.

Ever since last August, Mr. Bellamy Partridge's *Country Lawyer* has been one of the six non-fiction best-sellers in America. It will be published in England by Harrap on January 25th. The story of Samuel Selden Partridge of Phelps, New York, begins in the late sixties when village life in America was at its best. It is told by his son who worked with him as law student and partner and is based on cases and records taken from the country lawyer's files.

Harrap will publish on January 18th *Drums at Dusk*, a novel about the slaves of Haiti by the negro poet and novelist, Arna Bontemps.

Miss Phyllis Bentley's new novel, *Take Courage*, a story of the Civil War in Great Britain against a Yorkshire background, comes from Gollancz on January 15th. Gollancz is to launch in January a series of *Tracts for the Times*, 100-page booklets at 9*d*. each. The first two on *What is Russia Doing?* will be by Andrew Rothstein, a Tass Agency Correspondent, and Sir Norman Angell, who will express contrasting points of view.

Frank Owen, Editor of the *Evening Standard*, is the author of *The Three Dictators*, linked portraits of Mussolini, Stalin and Hitler in which the differences and likenesses of the Leaders are evoked, which comes from Allen and Unwin on January 16th. On the same day this firm publishes R. W. B. Clarke's *The Economic Effort of War*, a factual estimate of the changes in economic structure involved by modern warfare.

Our Own Times, 1914–1939, by Stephen King-Hall, has been brought up to date (September 3rd) by the author and will be published by Nicholson and Watson in one volume on January 11th. This firm announces for January 25th Raymond Gram Swing's *How War Came*, based on the author's broadcasts to America from the beginning of March 1939, to the outbreak of war and *Science Today and Tomorrow* by Waldemar Kaempffert, Science and Engineering Editor of the *New York Times*. His book is largely concerned with the social aspects and implications of modern science.

Macmillan announces for January 16th *Economic Warfare*, by Paul Einzig, a study of the economic strength and prospects of the various belligerent countries.

Mr. R. S. Lambert, former editor of *The Listener*, is the author of *Ariel and All His Quality* (previously announced as *Twelve Years with the B.B.C.*) coming from Gollancz on January 15th.

For the second week in January, Heinemanns announce "Elizabeth's" new comedy, *Mr. Skeffington*, a study of a flirtatious lady rescued from the fear of old age by her husband.

The publication date of the Simenon volume of detective stories *Maigret Travels South* (Routledge) has been postponed to January 8th.

MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

Week-end Competitions

No. 517

Set by Thomas Smallbones

The usual prizes are offered for a set of six Apocryphal sayings of Dr. Johnson on: The N. E. D., Psycho-analysis, Electric Light, Buchmanism, Insulin, the B.B.C.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, Jan. 12th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 514

Set by V. S. Pritchett

The usual prizes are offered for an embarrassing story about a dog. Length not more than 200 words.

Report by V. S. Pritchett

Act IV, Scene 4, of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* seemed to be the ideal of by far the greater number of competitors in this competition. I mean their ideal dog embarrassment. But Shakespeare, not being genteel nor coy, easily beat them:

"Nay, I remember the trick you served me when I took my leave of Madame Silvia; did I not bid thee still mark me, and do as I do? When didst thou see me heave up my leg and make water against a gentlewoman's farthingale? Didst thou ever see me do such a trick?"

Two competitors, Launce and David Rintoul, sent in the quotation; it is enough to show the necessity of style in this kind of anecdote. It is not sufficient to write merely what would be turned down by *Punch*. It will, I am sure, give readers pleasure to hear that I was taken aback by the general impropriety of the entries; perhaps I am highbrow about dogs, but I swear I did not have in mind the distress which their physical habits and pleasures gives to aunts, spinsters, lady mayoresses and the clergy. I had been influenced in setting this competition by the sort of embarrassment one meets in the dog items of *This England*. The awful embarrassment of these animals is the faithful way in which they disclose the character of their owners.

The most brilliant of the indecent entries comes from D. K. Hardisty. I hope it is original and not a chestnut which, because of the alarming purity of my mind, no one has dared to tell me up to now.

Jean Lord has a distressing creature which twitches at the onset of pregnancy in others and has given a turn to many a lady in delicate health. Suzanne Macpherson has a schoolmistress who asks the class: "What is a beech." Banter, a Sealyham, has the awkwardness of meeting his son, a Sealydachs. Mr. Allan M. Laing is subtle about the shortsighted old gentleman who, greeted enthusiastically by a dog in the street, assumes it is a stray and hands it benevolently to the police who inform him it is his own dog. That is a parable on charity. There is a good deal of trouble with aunts—Mr. Fordham and the bitch's pills for example. If we were not prudes how few stories there would be. M. Congo was amusing about one Barrington, who boasted his dog would follow him anywhere. It waited outside its master's door. One morning it waited outside the door of a lady who was a guest at the house. But the pure seemed to me better and my final choice lay between G. F. Plant, Philip Toynbee, both of whom have German stories, Mr. Martin Walsh's naive story, and Mr. Hardisty as Führer of the Rabelaisians. I propose the two prizes should be amalgamated and divided among these four.

Some years ago a friend of mine, on being posted by his firm to a French colony in West Africa, took with him his pedigree Alsatian bitch. Shortly afterwards he saw there a handsome Alsatian dog accompanied by its French mistress and, being anxious to arrange a "marriage," but possessing little French, he confided his difficulties to a resident. The latter coached him in the necessary formula and subsequently my friend hailed the French lady with: "Bon jour, madame, veuillez-vous me prêter votre chien pour couvrir ma chienne." "Mais oui, monsieur, certainement," was the reply, and my friend triumphantly led the dog to its bride. The dog was returned by a servant and some time later, on meeting its owner, my friend felt that thanks were due and stopped to express them haltingly to her. Noticing that he was politely standing bareheaded in the tropical sun, the lady bade him: "Mais couvrez-vous, monsieur." Misinterpreting the request as an inquiry, my friend, somewhat embarrassed but perhaps also somewhat expectant, replied: "Er . . . oui, madame; de temps en temps!"

D. K. HARDISTY

It happened at a garden party in Berlin. At that time, the Jews were being bitterly persecuted and the very name of "Jew" was anathema to the Nazis. On the other hand, Hitler was adopting a very friendly attitude to the English: and that was no doubt the reason why he came up to me and began to pat the pedigree dachshund which I held in my arms. "And what," he asked, "is this charming animal's name?" "Judy," I answered, quite innocently. Hitler started as if he had been shot, drew back his hand, and stalked away scowling, followed by his scowling entourage. Too late I realised that, to Hitler and his Nazis, the name Judy must have had a sinister sound. It was one of the most embarrassing moments of my life. G. F. PLANT

Hans who had come to stay with us was very young and charmed the whole family. One evening—after port and brandy, to which he was not accustomed—Hans told us the funniest scene he had ever witnessed.

"I was with my friends in the street. One of my friends, Werner he's called, is the best shot in the University. He had a gun in his hands, when an old lady came past—a fat old lady with a fat dachshund at the end of a lead. Werner lifted up his gun and shot that dog stone dead—the deadest dog you ever saw. But the old lady, she marched straight up the street, dragging the dog behind her. Ach! zum Tot lachen!" Outside my mother's three dachshunds whined at the drawing-room door. PHILIP TOYNBEE

I worked at my last mill 20 years. It was near River Calder (Jas. Kaye and Co., Midland Mills) and I used a near way home on the river-side that inspired many of E. Wallace's works.

One night I had been working over until 10.0. On my way home I heard a lady sobbing. I said "Na lass, what's up." She said my husband wants me to drown this little dog. I said, come put it in this old bread carrier, I'll throw it in't river. She whispered "Hush, let me put it in. I'll stroke it until you put it in."

When lo! a "bobby" (policeman) came out of a corner he shone his lamp and called out what about it. I dropped the carrier and ran and left the lady to explain. You see, I am a respectable married man with an unknown lady.

What had I to do. By the way, I avoided that path ever after.

MARTIN WALSH

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 515

Set by R. H. S. Crossman

Some years ago THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION set a Christmas General Knowledge Paper. Professor Hogben objected that it was a test not of general knowledge, but of the special sort of useless information which goes by the name of Culture.

The usual prizes are offered for a general knowledge paper (not more than 300 words) which really is a test of *general* knowledge.

Report by R. H. S. Crossman

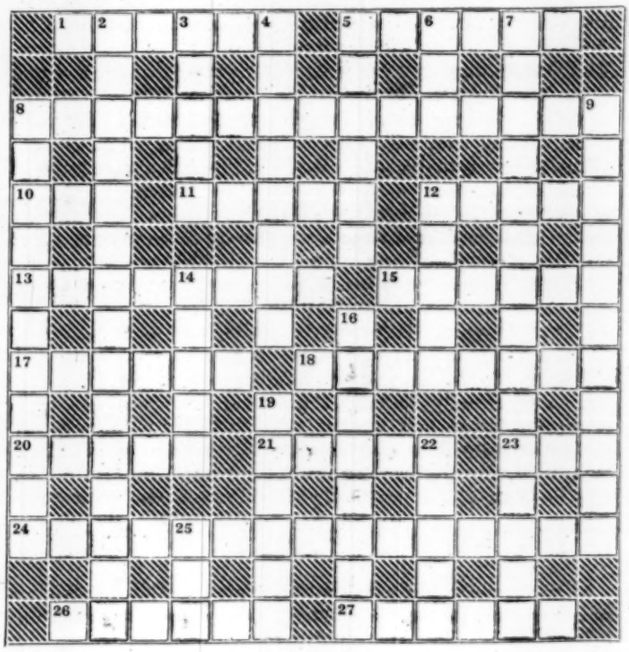
Either the critics who scarified us for our General Knowledge Paper do not enter for competitions or else criticism is a great deal easier than setting a paper. Most of the papers sent in had to be dismissed either because they were incredibly dull or because it would have needed a long essay to answer each question. "What in detail are the Thirty-nine Articles?" may be a test of a general knowledge: it has no place in a General Knowledge paper. One competitor actually asked "How do you spell effervescence?" It is not enough to select interesting subjects for your questions; you have also got to spend a lot of ingenuity on framing them in an interesting way. No question, for instance, is any good which can be answered by a quick reference to Whitaker's Almanack or a text-book of chemistry. A good question should catch your attention and make you want to waste Sunday afternoon ferreting out the answer. Redling pleased me with his "Distinguish between *Shinto* and *Shinty*, *Kinderscout* and *Roverscout*." Another nice question (though too bourgeois for some tastes) was "Give the culinary meaning of Mornay, Portugaise, Maryland, Dieppoise, Vicky"; while Patrick Thornhill even more ingeniously asked: "In what kinds of society would you display your knowledge of: brassards, brasseries, brass-rags, brassieres, brass-rubbing, brass-tacks," and ended up with "When you face east in England, say whether north or south is (*a*) starboard, (*b*) near-side, (*c*) stroke-side (to cox), (*d*) decani."

Most of the "scientific" questions offended Professor Hogben's standards of good teaching. They either demanded lists of those who had made famous discoveries or definitions of terms. Paul Espinasse sent in easily the best scientific paper, including the admirable "What temperature do lice die at?" and a nice test for the sociologist: "To what union or unions could men belong who affix the overhead wires for trolley-buses?" He had the best technique and would have got a prize if his paper had been a little more general. The spoof papers were damp squibs and an ingenious rhymed examination from D. J. T. Lurk just failed to come off. M. Cassel, A. F. Lund and Donald Campbell all came near a prize. For once Allan M. Laing was a bit dull.

After a good deal of doubt, I have pooled and divided the prizes between J. M. Walbury and his friends of H.M.S. *Cyclops*, Speen Ploughman and J. H. G. Gibbs. Since all the prize-winners were good but all also made some queer mistakes, I propose to set a composite paper next week.

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 513

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

Miss Theilmann, 143, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.

ACROSS

1. Bids—for the fair perhaps. (6)
5. It is the function of drawers to do this. (6)
8. State of those who rear grouse. (15)
10. See 6. (3)
11. In and out in confusion. (5)
12. But it's not severe when it wags. (5)
13. Sour, not grapes, but milk. (8)
15. How to indicate the straight road. (6)
17. These flowers should be all the colours of the rainbow. (6)
18. A leisure-ly shower? (8)
20. Blue and white stream-ers. (5)
21. 10 is in a muddle. (5)
23. See 25. (3)
24. Companies "walk out" to such a tune. (15)
26. Not French *gin*, for instance. (6)
27. Singer who ends in a hurry. (6)

DOWN

2. Would one get a new angle on Hamlet in one of these? (15)
3 (rev.). This bird would make a good mascot for the Navy. (5)
4. You'd think they would be topping folk. (8)
5. Fed up finally. (6)
6 (rev.) and 10 (rev.). Does he make a crib? (3)
7. They show the yellow light of course. (15)
8. County victorious on the Turf. (11)
9. The last sheep left in the wilderness. (11)
12. That it is put on a horse has no connection with the Stud Book. (5)
14. Posen in ruins. (5)
16. Bird that disregards the traffic lights. (8)
19. In the Bell in Nether Wallop. (6)
22. Dial for the speaking clock, or see the sea. (5)
25 and 23. Saintly bird. (3)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

N	I	G	H	T	S	H	A	D	E	■	E	M	I	M
E	■	I	■	A	■	A	■	I	■	W	■	O	■	E
C	A	L	E	B	■	M	I	D	W	I	N	T	E	R
K	■	T	■	I	■	B	■	D	■	N	■	E	■	R
■	T	E	L	T	U	O	■	L	A	N	G	T	R	Y
G	■	D	■	H	■	N	■	E	■	E	■	■	■	M
U	P	G	R	A	D	E	■	D	E	R	O	N	D	A
E	■	E	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	E	■	K
S	I	D	I	N	G	S	■	C	A	B	O	O	S	E
T	■	■	■	O	■	A	■	E	■	O	■	L	■	R
N	E	W	S	M	A	N	■	R	O	B	S	O	N	■
I	■	E	■	A	■	D	■	A	■	A	■	G	■	B
G	U	A	R	D	R	O	O	M	■	D	W	I	N	E
H	■	R	■	S	■	W	■	I	■	I	■	S	■	A
T	O	Y	S	■	I	N	O	C	U	L	A	T	E	D